

TIRUCCANDA VIRUTTAM of **Tirumaliṣai Ālvār**



**Ālvār's Utsava Murthy
at his birth Place**

By
B.S.S.Iyengar

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of

Tirumaliṣai Ālvār

**Text transliterated in English,
meaning, notes with an introduction**

By

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Preface

At the age of six, I was initiated into Divyaprabandham by my illustrious Acharya Late Sri Ayi Narasimhachar Swamy of my native place Srirangapattanam. Long ago, sixty-six years back I had learnt Tiruccanda Viruttam as a part of the Mudalayiram. Neither I had the leisure nor the interest to know the meaning of it. But always I was lured away by the muse of its lyrical beauty, whenever it was recited in the Goshti at Tirunarayanapuram by the Adhyapakas. Now, asked by my revered brother Sri BSS Iyengar to get this book printed with a preface, my attempt to acquaint myself with the text of Tiruccanda Viruttam drove me to a kind of curiosity to delve deep into the meaning of the two great works of the Nalayira Divyaprabandham. More I read more it drives me to ecstasy. Both the works of Tirumaḷiṣai Ālvār, otherwise called Bhaktisara, Nānmukhan Tiruvandādi and Tiruccanda Viruttam are really unique, to read and to understand.

Even before editing this text with translation and notes, I feel that attempt should have been made to present the annotated edition of Nānmukhan Tiruvandādi which is equally fascinating. In both these works, Bhaktisara in his inimitable style brings out the essence of the Prasthanatraya. If Nānmukhan Tiruvandādi delineates the nature of the Paratatva and the means to attain it, in the work Tiruccanda Viruttam, the padarthas are enumerated and cosmology and cosmogony are described as mentioned in the Upanishads. According to the Ālvār, Sriyahpati Srimanarayana alone is the Supreme, the Paratatva, through which he establishes the eternal relationship between the Paramathma and Sridevi. The work also extols beautifully the Para, Vyuha, Vibava, Antaryami and Archa forms of the Supreme. According to the Ālvār He (Lord) is the only savior. One might not have born in any of the four Varnas, might not have studied the four Vedas, might not have

conquered the sense organs, might not have the knowledge of anything, but only the unswerving devotion to lord Srimannarayana and surrendering to His lotus feet with firm determination are enough to qualify him to attain Moksha. He (Lord) will bestow His grace on His own upon His Bhaktha. Apart from the enchanting muse of the lyric, most luring is the numbering *Aarumarumarumai*, *Aindumaindumaindumai*, etc. As the editor puts it, very difficult indeed to understand the work and the meaning and the significance of the various numbers mentioned therein, with out the Vykhyana of the Peria Accanpillai. Sri BSS Iyengar's lucid translation and crisp notes have definitely made things easier for the readers to understand this terse but enchanting work.

Due to his ill health, Sri BSS Iyengar is forced to stay at U.S.A. But his strong will and determination always contributed much to edit works on Srivishnavisam to enrich the publications of Srī Parampara Sabha. I hope this latest work of the Sabha will really enthrall its readers. My pranamam to Sri BSS Iyengar.

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TIRUCCANDA VIRUTTAM

of Tirumaḷiṣai Āḷvār

Introduction

For a country which has the reputation of having preserved, without mutations its scriptures, the oldest ever in the world, India has scant records about the great men that trod on it. We know very little about even the great men who were recognised as such during their lifetime except their names and, at best the asterisms they were born in. Even then, it is the peculiarity of the Tamil country that the great men were not addressed by the original names of their childhood but by some distinguishing names such as Tirumaḷiṣai Āḷvār, Paṭṭiṇattār etc. If that is so of these greatmen, what to say of people who were addressed as "Pey" (demon) and "Pūtam" (evil spirit) in their own lifetimes, and whose greatness was recognised long after they were gone ? By that time, it would be too late to collect authentic details about them and they would be deified by attributing fancy origins and deeds.

This is the case with many of the earlier Āḷvārs and it is more so in the case of Tirumaḷiṣai Āḷvār. Traditional hagiological accounts place him to a time earlier than the advent of Kaliyuga (over 5000 years ago). A divine parentage is given to him and he is said to have lived for a period anywhere from 300 years to over 1000 years. A scholar has tried to justify this long life-span by stating that Adam in the Bible lived for 930 years, forgetting that Adam was a legendary figure whereas Tirumalisai

Āḷvār has left behind concrete proof of his existence in the form of the two great compositions Nānmukhan Tiruvandādi and Tiruccanda Viruttam. Hagiological accounts mention of his encounter with Siva face to face and getting the better of him. They also mention that the reposing idols of Yatōktakāri at Kāñci and Ārāvamūdam at Kumbhakoṇam reacted by moving at the behest of Āḷvār. We should not brush aside these accounts completely but take in as much as our faith will allow as reflecting the very powerful personality that Tirumaḷiṣai Āḷvār was.

In the Tamil country, the golden age of Sangam literature lasted for a long period from the fifth century B.C. to the third century A.D. The literature during this period was mostly secular relating to romance and public affairs and there was very little serious discussion on philosophy except the narration of some purāṇic incidents. There was a lull for about 200 years from third century AD, when only some didactic literature came out. The most productive Bhakti period which lasted from fifth century A.D. to end of eighth century produced the finest Bhakti literature that the world has ever known. The Āḷvārs and Nāyanmārs lived during this period. Temples which existed from a much earlier period became popular centres of pilgrimage by itinerants and mystics.

Tirumaḷiṣai Āḷvār, a junior contemporary of the first three Āḷvārs, namely, Poikai, Pey and Būtam lived, presumably, in the fifth century A.D. Credit must go to these four Āḷvārs to have laid the solid foundation to the great edifice of Śrivaishnavism. They anticipated the systematisation of Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy by Rāmānuja by more than 500 years. It is remarkable how all the Āḷvārs who covered a period of three hundred years have spoken with one voice about the essence of Viśiṣṭādvaita

such as the supremacy of Nārāyaṇa, the position of Śrī, Śārīra-Śārīri bhāva, the vyūha theory, the Avatāra rahasya, the Arcirādi mārga and the service at the end of it etc.

We have no clue regarding the name by which Tirumaḷiṣai Āḷvār was called in his childhood which he spent in the house of his foster(?) parents Tiruvāḷan and Paṅkayacclvi in the mēdāra community (basket-weavers) in the town of Tirumaḷiṣai. Even in his childhood, he had a restless mind and started practicing Aṣṭāṅga yōga. Historians consider the period about this time as a dark period in history. A certain sect of people, quite alien to Tamilnāḍu, called Kalabhras were dominant in this region at the time. We do not know if they were the same as the Ājīvikas mentioned by A.L. Basham. The lad left the house of his parents at the age of seven in search of peace. Presumably, he studied and practiced all the religious ideas current at the time like Jainism, Buddhism, Cārvāka etc. one by one until he got disillusioned with each one of them. He practiced severe austerities and penances. Nothing satisfied him and he became a follower of Śiva for quite some time. At that time, a certain Śivabhakta and Siddha by name Śivākkiyar composed a few poems. Efforts were made to identify this Śivākkiyar with Tirumaḷiṣai Āḷvār but nothing is conclusive.

In the course of his sojourns, Tirumaḷiṣai Āḷvār reached Tiruvaḷḷikkēṇi where he encountered Pey Āḷvār. Pey Āḷvār was no disputant but a mystic. Anyway he could convince Tirumaḷiṣai that he was in the wrong camp and initiated him to Śrīvaisṇavism. In recognition of the deep devotion shown by the new convert to Nārāyaṇa. Pey Āḷvār gave the name Bhaktisāra to him.

After sometime, Bhaktisāra returned to his native town of Tirumaḷiṣai. A certain lad by the name of Kaṇikaṇṇan

became a companion and desciple to him. He then shifted to iVehka in Kāñci along with his disciple and stayed there for quite sometime. It is at this time that the arca idol reposing at Vehka responded physically, as related previously, to Āḷvār's words. It is said that the idol actually got up, went out and returned the next day to repose again at the behest of Bhaktisāra. This incident cannot be brushed away lightly as two great men, Aruṇagirinātar, a devotee of Skanda and Kumaraguruparar, a devotee of Śiva, both by no means friends of Bhaktisāra, have mentioned this incident in their works.

The restless soul that he was, Bhaktisāra moved out again from Vēhka and after visiting a few places, he reached Kumbhakōṇam via Perumpuliyūr. He is said to have practiced yōga and ultimately attained salvation at a very ripe age at Kumbhakōṇam. There is a belief in some quarters that Bhaktisāra came to Mēlkoṭe and was in yōga for a very long period before he passed away there.

Tirumaḷiṣai Āḷvār has left us two beautiful works Nānmukan Tiruvandādi and Tiruccanda Viruttam, Nanmukan Tiruvandādi is in a very difficult metre to compose. It is called "Veṇba" in Tamil poetry. It is also an "andādi" in which the first word of a pācuram is picked from the last word of the previous pācuram. This composition gets its name Tannukam Tiruvandādi from the first word Nānmukan in the composition. It has 96 pācurams of four lines each and is included in the Iyarpa portion of the Divyaprabanaham. In this composition Āḷvār asserts with all the vehemence at his command the supremacy of Nārāyaṇa over all others. If it sounds a little fanatical, it should not be construed so as Āḷvār has given expression after thoroughly convincing himself

about the futility of all other schools of which he had first hand experience. Aḷagiya Manavāla Nāyanār, the famous author of “Ācārya Hṛdayam” calls him “Uraiyl iḍātavar” (the one who does not put back his sword in its sheath).

→ The second composition Tiruccvand a Viruttam which is the main topic of this book derives its name from the poetic metre in which it is composed. It has 120 pācurams and is included in the first thousand of the Divya Prabandham. The composition is so charming that the chanter is tempted to sway himself to the lilting music coming out naturally in the composition. This kind of metre was first used by Ilango Aḍigaḷ in Cilappādikāram. The pācurams have four lines each with seven cīrs per line. The first six cīrs of each line are of one type called “tēmā” and the last cir is called “kūvilam.” Thus, the refrain of each line runs - tāna tāna tāna tāna tāna tāna tānanā.” This reminds one of the galloping of a horse. It is recited in Śrīrangam when the processional deity is taken on the horse vāhanam.

Bhaktisāra is at his cerebral best in Tiruccanda Viruttam. Its intellectual and intriguing ideas can be understood best only with the help of an enlightened commentary and we should be grateful to Periya Accān Piḷḷai, the vyākhyāna cakravarty who has made it easy for us. The composition starts with the narration of the cosmology of creation using jugglery of numbers with telling effect to bring out its awesome nature. Avatāra rahasya is dealt in detail. The Lord in arcāvatāra reposing in Śrīrangam and Kumbhakōṇam are eulogized. Many pācurams stress the oneness of the Lord in Paramapada, Milk-occeon, avatāras and arca. In the final, Āḷvār builds up by stages the total helplessness of the individual soul and affirms that it is only the Lord that should grace and lead the

TIRUCCANDA VIRUTTAM

(Text transliterated in English, meaning and notes)

Pācuram 1

*Bū nilāya aindumāyp puṇal kaṇṇinṛ,a nāngumāy
Tīnilaya mūṇṛ.umāyc ciṛ.anda kāliraṇḍumāy
Mīnilāyatonṛ.umāki vēṛ.uvēṛ.utaṇmaiyāy
Nīnilāyavaṇṇam niṇṇai yār niṇaikkavallarē |*

Meaning : Who can perceive you the way you stand as the five qualities (tanmātras) inherent in the earth element, as the four qualities in the water element, as the three qualities inherent in fire (the element of brilliance), as the two qualities in the powerful wind element, as the single quality inherent in ether element, and as the inner controller of the several varied things (sentient and insentient things commencing with celestials)

Notes : Earth, water, fire, air and ether are the five elements (pañcabhūtas) constituting the mundane worlds in the cosmic egg. The earth element has the five qualities (tanmātres) of sound (śabda), touch (sparśa), colour (rūpa), taste (rasa) and odour (gandha). The water element has the four qualities of sound, touch, colour and taste. The element fire (tējas) has the three qualities of sound, touch and colour only. The element of air has the two qualities of sound and touch only. The element of ether has only the quality of sound. The Lord is thus the material cause of the worlds too. As the inner controller of all things in the worlds, He is unaffected by the defects of ignorance and karma of the sentient

beings, and the mutations and changes associated with nonsentient things.

Pācuram 2

Āṛ.umār.umār.umāy ōraindum aindum aindumāy
 Ēṛ.ucīriraṇḍumūṇṛ.um ēḷ.umār.umeṭṭumāy
 Vēṛ.uvēr.u ṇānamāki meyyinōḍuppoyyumāy
 Ūrōḍōcaiyāyavaindumāyavāya māyaṇē ||

Meaning : You are (propitiated in) the six yagas made eligible to perform from the six karmas (duly observed at appropriate times) in the six seasons (of the year). You preside over the Pañca Mahāyajñas and the Pañca Āhuties as the controller of the five Agnis (performer made eligible duly by the six karmas). You are (the granter of) the two highly cherished qualities of knowledge (jñāna) and the consequent detachment (vairāgya) of things mundane. You are the resulting three goals of prosperity, Kaivalya and Mōkṣa, as also the three stages of parabhakti, parajñāna and parama bhakti (due to jñāna and virāgya). Besides being true (to your devotees) by (granting them) the seven qualities of viveka etc. (to enable them to progressively reach the stage of Bhakti from Karma), the six qualities of jñāna, Bala etc and the eight qualities of Apahata pāpma, vijara etc. (after enabling them to reach you), you are false to the various others with distorted visions and knowledge. (Who can envisage) you with such great feats who came down in the cowherd clan, materialised to the five sense perceptions such as feel and sound ?

Notes : With the dawn of the seven qualities of Vivēka etc, **one** may get knowledge about upāsana (propitiation) of **the Lord** which yields the three goals (puruṣārthas) of

presperity, Kaivalya and Mōkṣa of his choice, after being made eligible by the observance of the six karmas at appropriate times. One may also acquire, by the Lord's grace, knowledge about God-head and vairāgya leading to the three successive stages of parabhakti, parajñāna and paramabhakti resulting in mōkṣa, when the soul acquires forms and features similar to the Lord Himself. Such a lofty Lord had come down to this earth in person for the devotees to meditate on.

The six *Karmas* are 1) Yajana, 2) Yājana, 3) Adhyayana, 4) Adhyāpana, 5) Dāna, and 6) Pratigraha.

The six *seasons* are 1) Vasanta, 2) Grīṣma, 3) Varṣa, 4) Śarad, 5) Hēmanta, and 6) Śīśira.

The Six *yāgas* are 1) Āgnēya, 2) Darśapūrṇa, 3) Cāturmāsya, 4) Jyōtiṣtōma, 5) Nirūdha pucubandha and 6) Sarvakṛatu.

The five *Āhutis* are 1) Prāna, 2) Apāna, 3) Vyāna, 4) Udāna, 5) Samāna.

The five *Mahayajñas* are 1) Deva, 2) Pitṛ, 3) Bhūta, 4) Manuṣya and 5) Brahma.

The five *Agṇis* are 1) Gārhapatya, 2) Āhavanīya, 3) Dakṣiṇāgni, 4) Sanya, and 5) Avasatya.

The seven *qualities* are 1) Vivēka, 2) Vimōka, 3) Abhyāsa, 4) Kriyā, 5) Kalyāna, 6) Anavasāda, and 7) Anuddarṣana.

The six *qualities* of the Lord are Jñāna, Bala, Aiśvarya, Vīrya, Tejas and Śakti.

The eight *qualities* in Paramapada are 1) free from sin, 2) free from old age, 3) free from death, 4) free from sorrow,

5) free from hunger, 6) free from thirst, 7) complete fulfilment of desires (satyakāma), and 8) accomplishment of will (satya sankalpa).

Pācuram 3

*Aindumaindum aindumāki allavar.ṛ.uḷ āyumāy
Aindum mūṇṛ.umonṛ.umāki niṇṛ.a ādidēvanē |
Aindumaindumaindumāki antarattaṇainduniṇṛ.u
Aindumaindumāya niṇṇai yāvarkāṇavallarē ?*

Meaning : Primordial Lord ! You are standing (in this world) as the inner controller of the sentient beings which are apart and not (the insentient things consisting of the twenty-four entities, namely), the five elements (earth, water etc.), the five jñānēndriyas, the five karmēndriyas, the five Tanmātras (sound etc.) Prakṛti, Ahankāra, Mahat, and the (unique) mind. (During praḷaya), you stay tranquilly in Paramapada with a body composed of the five śaktis (mentioned in Pañcōpaniṣad mantras) along with the five karmēndriyas and five jñānēndriyas appropriate to you, the cynasure of the five sense perceptions, with several places of enjoyment, instruments of enjoyment, celestials, guosties and muktas. Who can visualise you (with self effort if not by your grace like Āḷvār) ?

Notes : Pācuram 1 said that the Lord is the sole cause of the mundane worlds (Līlāvibhūti). Pācuram 2 said that the ultimate aim of all life is the stay in Paramapada (Nityavibhuti). This (No.3) states that the Lord is the sole Master of both the Līla and Nitya Vibhutis.

Pācuram 4

*Mūṇṛ.umuppatāṛ.inḍōdu oraindumaindumaindumāy
 Mūṇṛ.umūrtiyāi mūṇṛ.u mūṇṛ.umūṇṛ.umāy
 Tōṇṛ.ucōtimūṇṛ.umāyt tuḷakkamil viḷakkamāy
 Enṛ.enāviyuḷ pukundadu eṇkolō ? emmīśanē |*

Meaning : My Sovereign Lord ! How affable of you that you entered my mind as the enlightenment (as the letter A - "A" iti brahma) without any effort (on my part), the effulgence seen in the three letters (AUM of the Praṇava) which is in the twelve-lettered Mantra (Aum namō bhagavatē vāsudēvāya) and also in the three vēdas (Ṛk, Yajus and Sāma) formed of the fifty-four letters (of the Vedic alphabet) !

Notes : Mūṇṛ.umuppat ... aindumāy - the thirty three consonants from "ka" to "ha" the fifteen vowels from "A" to "ah" and the six end letters "ḷa, kṣa, tra, jña ōm, and śrī a total of 54 letters constitute the vēdic alphabet.

Pācuram 5

*Niṇṛ.iyaṅkum oṇṛ.ala urukkaḷtōṇṛ.um āviyāy
 Oṇṛ.i uḷkalandu niṇṛ.a niṇṇatanmai inṇatenṛ.u
 Enṛ.um yārkkum eṇṇirande ādiyāy niṇṇundivāy
 Anṛ.unāṇmukaṛ.payanda ādidēvaṇallayē ||*

Meaning : Primordial Lord ! Who can envice you who begot as the foremost the four faced Brahma that day through your navel and yet are beyond anybody's reckoning at any time that your nature is such and such though intimately mixed in the hearts of all bodies existing, both moving and stationary, without exception ?

Notes : This Pācuram states that though the scriptures speak generally of the Lord as the root cause of the

worlds and as the inner controller, it is only he that has understood His true nature.

Pācuram 6

*Nāgamēndu mēruverpai nāgamēndu maṇṇiṇar
Nāgamēndumākamākam mākamēnduvārpuṇal
Mākamēndumaṇkulti ōr vāyuvaindamaindukāttu
Ēkamēndi niṇṇanīrmai niṇkaṇē iyanṇatē ||*

Meaning : Lord mounted on Ādisēṣa in Parāmapada ! (who can visualise) your benevolence in supporting, all alone, the Mēru mountain supporting the svarga, the earth supported by the elephants (Aṣṭa Diggajas), the flooding Ganga borne in the sky, the clouds in the sky; and the unique Jāṭharāgni and the five life-giving airs brought into action and protected by you, flourishing by your side.

Notes : In these worlds, it would appear that things are supported by other things even as the Lord appears supported on Ādisēṣa. But it is not so. It is only the Lord that gives them that strength and supports every thing. As an authority, Ālvār quotes from Yōgaśāstra that the Jāṭharāgni (vaiśvānara Agni) and the Pañca Vāyus. (Prāna, Apāna, Vyāna, Udāna and Samāna) are controlled by the Lord.

Pācuram 7

*Onṇiraṇḍumūrttiyāy uṇṇaḱkamōḍu uṇarcciyāy
Onṇiraṇḍukālamāka vēlai ṇālamāyināy
Onṇiraṇḍu tiyumāki āyanāya māyaṇē !
Onṇiraṇḍu kaṇṇināṇum unṇai ēttavallaṇē !*

Meaning : Creating the two (Brahma and Siva) from your unique state (as Viṣṇu) and also the two qualities

of Rajas and Tamas from your state of pure Sattva, thereby admixing ignorance along with knowledge, you also created the two auxiliary Gārhapatya and Dākṣiṇatya fires along with the main Āhavanīya fire in this blessed land of Bhāratavarṣa bound by the seas (karma Bhūmi). Lord of great feats ! you took birth in the cowherd clan (dharma samsthāpanāya - to establish order). Can Śiva with the third eye of Śakti along with the (normal) two eyes of Jñāna praise you adequately ?

Notes : In these worlds, ignorance is always admixed with knowledge though the Lord has provided Karmic expiations in Bhārat and had come down to establish righteousness. Even Śiva, who is supposed to preside over Jñāna when the Sāttvic quality dominates in him, is subject to Tamas quality. Therefore, except in rare cases like Āḷvār with the unsolicited grace of the Lord, nobody is aware of the true nature of the Lord.

Pācuram 8

Ādiyāṇa vāṇavarkkum aṇḍamāya appuṇattu

Ādiyāṇa vāṇavarkkum ādiyāṇa ādi nī

Ādiyāṇa vāṇavāṇar andakālam nī uraitti

Ādiyāṇa kālam niṇṇai yāvarkāṇa vallarē |

Meaning : You are prior even to the Nityasūris, of whom you are the cause, (in Paramapada) who are beyond and more ancient than the celestials (who created the worlds) in the beginning in the cosmic egg. You ordain the duties of the ancient celestials for the particular time. Who has been able to see your true nature from beginningless time ?

Notes : The Lord has been there ever since in Paramapada, even during Praḷaya as per the saying, "Sa dēva Soumya,

idamagramāsīt." He then created celestials and appointed functionaries among them to look after the routine affairs of creation, sustenance and destruction. Even they have never been able to know the Lord's true nature at any time.

Pācuram 9

*Tātulāṽvukonṛ.aimālai tunṇuceñcaḍaic civan
Nītiyāl vaṇangupāda ! niṇmalā ! nilāya cīr
Vēdavāṇargītavēlvi nītiyāṇa kēlviyār
Nītiyāl vaṇanku kiṇṛ.a nīrmai niṇkaṇ niṇṛ.atē |*

Meaning : Immaculate Lord whose feet are worshipped ritually by Śiva of the red matted locks and with pollen-rich Konṛ.ai garland ! It is only to you exclusively that the highly proficient scholars in the eternal vēdas of great merit performing (Sāttvic and self-less) sacrifices chanting the Sāma gāna prostrate in prescribed manner due to prudent learning.

Notes : It is because the Lord excels in everyway as detailed in the prevous pācurams that the two types of cētanās namely, those who seek favours as typified by Śiva and those of sāttvic nature who have realised His true nature by constant meditation and observance of vedic karmas worship at His feet.

Pācuram 10

*Tanṇuḷē tiraitteḷ.um taraṅkaveṇṭaṭaṅkaḍal
Tanṇuḷē tiraittaḷ.undu aḍaṅkukiṇṛ.a taṇmaipōl
Niṇṇuḷē pirandirundu niṇṛ.pavum tiripavum
Niṇṇuḷē aḍaṅkukiṇṛ.a nīrmai niṇkaṇ niṇṛ.atē ||*

Meaning : Just as the phenomenon of the waves raised from within itself of a sprawling white sea which absorbs them within itself after being raised by it, you have the benevolent nature of absorbing all the moving and stationary things, created and destroyed, within you.

Notes : The topic of the Lord as the material cause of the worlds dealt in pācuram one on words is concluded in this pācuram 10 by stating that all sentient and non-sentient things are absorbed in Him. The Lord is like the sea, deep, unfathomable, unperturbed and vast. Just as the wind raises the waves and water particles from within the sea itself, the Lord as sentient cause, brings forth the moving and stationary thing which constitute His body and is therefore the material cause of the worlds too. They go back to Him even as the waves and water particles go back to the sea.

Pācuram 11

Collināl toḍarccinī colappaḍum poruḷumnī
Collināl colappaḍātu tōṇṟukiṇṟa cṭinī
Collināl paḍaikka nī paḍaikkavandu tōṇṟiṇār
Collināl curuṅka niṇ kuṇaṅkaḷ collavallarē |

Meaning : You are the ordainer (of the appropriate puruṣārthas - the four goals of Dharma, Artha, Kāma, and Mōkṣa) of the Vēdas. You are the soul of the deities mentioned in the scriptures (as controlling the worlds). You appear as an effulgence only defying description otherwise even by the vēdas. Can those deities, who were created by you according to the vēdas, and who are seen as creating the worlds, be capable of speaking, even briefly, about your transcendental qualities ?

Notes : Doubts may arise as some passages in the vēdas could give rise to misinterpretation that certain deities are propitiated in the vēdas. Āḷvār refutes in this pācuram, with passages from the vēdas in mind which clearly state that it is He, who is propitiated in the vēdas, who is the ordainer of all the deities and who is the cause of the worlds of which they are beings.

Pācuram 12

Ulakutaṇṇai nī paḍaitti uḷḷoḍukkivaṭṭi mīndum
Ulaku taṇṇuḷē piṟatti ōṟiḍattaiyallaṭṭi āḷ
Ulaku ninṇōḍonṟi niṟkavēṟuniṟṟi āḍalāl
Ulakil ninṇaiyuḷḷa cūḷal yāvaruḷḷavallarē ||

Meaning : You created the worlds and you kept them inside you (during praḷaya). Further, you took birth in the worlds. You exist in the worlds intimately as if you are not different from them without leaving any place whatever. Who, in this world, can understand your designs ?

Notes : The Lord does not just usher in the worlds and leave them to their fates contented. He enters the worlds, intimately with each object, both stationary and moving, protects them, and provides an object for meditation.

Pācuram 13

Inṇaiyeṇṟu collalāvadillaiyādum iṭṭiḍai
Piṇṇaikēḷvaṇenbarlunpiṇakkuṇarnda peṟṟiyōṟ
Piṇṇaiyāya kōlamōḍū pērumūrum ādiyum
Ninṇai yārniṇaikkavallar nīrmailāl niṇaikkilē ||

Meaning : Nothing can be said about you that you are such and such on the basis of any (of you single) appearances. Even scholars well-versed in you

contradictory nature speak of you only as the spouse of Pinnai, the cowerdless. Who can comprehend you, if not by your own grace, the forms you assume at other times, the names (appropriate to your glories), the places (that you grace), and, the root source (of your avatāras - paratva and vyūha).

Notes : The esoterics of the Lord's descents (avatāra rahasya) are not easily discernable by one's own effort except by His own grace from His own utterances such as in Bhagavatgīta Chapter IV - verses 5-9. When He comes down in avatāras in various forms and species, fellow beings think of Him as one among them. At best, scholars with judgement may deify Him on the basis of a few of His divine acts.

Pācuram 14

*Tūymai yōgamāyinaṁ tuḷāyalaṅkal mālaiyāy !
 Āmaiyaṁki āḷkaḍal tuyiṇṇavādidēva ! niṇ
 Nāmadēyamiṇṇadenṇa vallamallavādilum
 Cā mavēda gītaṇāya cakrapāṇiyallaiyē ||*

Meaning : Ordainer of uncontaminated yōga ! Lord decorated with tulasi garland ! Primordial Lord who reposed in the deep sea as the Tortoise ! Though I am incapable of saying that your appellations are these and these only, are you not the Bearer of the Discus in your hands, eulogized in the Sā mavēda ?

Notes : Might be that the fellow beings are not able to decipher the avatāra rahasya, as per the previous pācuram, of the Lord. But, what about Āḷvār who is made immaculate by the constant practice of yōga ! Āḷvār says in this pācuram that he too knows that the Lord who

came down as a mere creature like Tortoise to oblige the self-seeking celestials, is beyond praise even in the vēdas.

Pācuram 15

*Aṅkamārṛu vēdanāṅgumāki niṅṛṛavarṛuḷē
Tangukiṅṛṛa taṅmaiṃyā taḍankaḍal paṇattalaic
Ceṅkaṇṇāgonaiḱḱanda celvamalku cīriṅāy
Caivaṇṇamaṇṇa mēṇi cārṇgapāṇiyallayē ||*

Meaning : As the impeccable authority of the four vēdas with their six auxiliary texts (aṅgas), you have the benign nature as the subject matter in them. With a body, white like the colour of the conch, you are reposing with overflowing prosperity and glory on Ādiśēṣa with red eyes on the hoods in the sprawling milk-ocean. Are you not the wielder of the Śārṅga bow (Rāma) ?

Notes : As the spring - board of all avatāras, the Lord reposes on Ādiśēṣa in Milk-ocean. In Kṛta yuga, the quality of sattva deminates the people and they see the Lord white which is the characteristic colour of Sattvaguṇa. In Trēta yuga, the same Lord came down as Rāma.

The six auxiliary texts of the vēdas are Śikṣā, Vyākaraṇa, Nirukta, Chandas, Jyōtiṣa and Kalpasūtras.

Pācuram 16

*Talaikkaṇattukaḷkuḷṛampucāti cōtitōṛṛṛṛa māy
Nilaiḱkaṇaṅgaḷ kāṇavandu niṛṛṛiyēlum, nīḍirum
Kalaikkaṇaṅgal cōrporuḷ karuttiṅāl niṇaikkōṇa
Malaikkaṇaṅgaḷ pōluṇarttum mātcī niṅtaṇmātcīyē ||*

Meaning : Even though you make divine appearances among all species from the highest calestials to the lowest

immovables and all other species (like human) in-between so as to enable even stationary objects to experience you, you cannot be gauged, either by meaning or words or implications, even by the eternal and widespread groups of treatises of knowledge. (caturdaśa vidyāsthāna - the fourteen branches of knowledge). The glories of your descents are impregnable like a range of mountains.

Notes : Tugaḷ - lowly like dust (stationary objects), The Lord came down as "kubjāmra" - a dwarf mango tree in Daṇḍakāraṇya. Nilaikkaṇaṅgaḷ kāṇavandu niṟṟiyēlum - even though you make yourself available even to stationary objects to experience you, such as the wind blowing on Him blows on the object also.

Pācuram 17

*Ēkamūrtti mūṇṟumūrtti nālumūrtti naṇmai cēr
Pōga mūrtti puṇṇiyattiṇ mūrttiyeṇṇil mūrttiyāy
Nāga mūrtti cayanamāy nalaṅkaḍal kiḍandu mēl
Ākamūrttiyāya vaṇṇamen koḷādidēvaṇē ||*

Meaning : You assume four forms (in vyūha) with the three (partial) forms (Sankarṣana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha) along with your (own) unique form (as Vāsudēva). With the same ardour you take forms beyond count (in avatāras) to the delight (Rāmaḥ sarva sattva manoharaḥ) of the beings and towards the succour of the virtuous (paritrāṇāya sadhūnām). Primordial Lord ! How benign of your that, besides your manifesting in idols (arcāvatāra), you also repose in the Milk-ocean on Ādiśēṣa (as a safe resort for the souls during praḷaya).

Pācuram 18

*Viḍattavāy orāyiram irāyiramkaṇ ventaḷal
Viḍuttu viḷivilādapādam mikka cōtitokka cīr
Toḍuttumēlvitaṇamāy pauvanīrarāvaṇai
Paḍutta pāyal paḷḷikolvadu enkolō ! vēlaivaṇṇaṇē ||*

Meaning : Sea-hued Lord ! When will it be (that I see) you repose in the cosmic waters on the bed of Ādiśēṣa with (the thousand hoods as) the canopy overhead with great effulgence and worthy glory freed of separation, emitting deadly fire from the two thousand eyes and the thousand poison-spitting mouths.

Notes : Dealing with the “avatāra rahasya,” Āḷvār mentioned at a few places, the Lord reposing in Milk-ocean previously. This created a desire in him to experience this set-up in more detail and he gives expression to it. The fierce look of Ādiśēṣa is due to his anxiety for the safety of the Lord when He appears in avatāras amidst cruel people.

Pācuram 19

*Puḷḷadāki vēdam nāṅgum ōdināy, atanṟiyum
Puḷḷiṇvāyp piḷandu puṭkoḍip piḍitta piṇṇarum
Puḷḷai yūrtiyādalāl adenkol ? minkoḷ nēmiyāy !
Puḷḷiṇmeyp pakaikkaḍal kiḍattal kādalittade ||*

Meaning : Besides preaching the four vēdas assuming the form of a swan, you split the beak of Bakāsura and, having Garuḍa as your banner, you rode the same cherished Garuḍa (as your vehicle). When will I see you with the effulgent descus reposing in the Milk-ocean Ādiśēṣa, the traditional enemy of Garuḍa now in comradeship.

Notes : The serpent and the eagle are traditional sworn enemies. But, the Lord destroys this enmity, symbolised by the dazzling discuss in His hand, and makes Garuḍa and Ādiśēṣa belonging to these two species, serve Him with mutual cordiality. He reposes in the Milk-ocean after asserting His protective aspects in the worlds towards His devotees, such as, 1) by destroying their enemy called ignorance by establishing the authority of the vēdas in His swan incarnation, 2) by killing Bakāsura symbolising the enemies of the devotees, and also by eradicating disbelief in God and His avatāras, 3) by flying the banner with Garuḍa to assure the devotees about His availability to them, and, 4) by riding Garuḍa to their places for their succour.

Pācuram 20

*Kūcamonṛ.uminṛ.i mācuṇampaḍuttu vēlainīr
Pēca niṇṛ.a dēvar vandu pāḍa muṇkiḍandadam
Pācamniṇṛ.a nīrilvāḷ.um āmaiyāṇa kēcavā
Ēcavanṛ.u nī kiḍandavār.u kūṛ.u tēṛ.avē ||*

Meaning : Kēcava (Lord who created Brahma and Śiva) ! You please clarify without feeling shy how you demeaned yourself that day (at the time of churning of the ocean) by staying (carrying the Mandāra mountain on your back) as the Tortoise living in water attached to it, even as you repose, since the time of creation, in cosmic water allaying the blemish (on Ādiśēṣa for your safety from the cruel worlds), being eulogized by the celestials specially come from their worlds to praise you.

Notes : It is appropriate that the Lord in the Tanscendent, served by Ādidēṣa who is free of anxiety regarding the safety of the Lord from the cruelty of the worlds, is

eulogized by the Nityasūris and denizens of Śvētadvīpa who worship Him for His own sake free of any selfish motives. But, it is no great credit to Him that celestials like Brahma and Indra who are His own creatures ordained in their duties also worship Him seeking favours. It is more degrading to the Lord that He comes down in the worlds to oblige the self-same celestials in forms such as a mere lowly tortoise and bears the heavy Mandara mountain for their sake.

Pācuram 21

Araṅkaṇē taraṅganīr kalaṅkavaṇru kuṇṇu cūl.

Maraṅkaḷtēya mānilaṅkuluṅga mācuṇum culāy

Neruṅkaṇī kaḍaindapōdu niṇṇacūrar encaiydār

Kuraṅgaiyāḷukande vendai kūṇutēṇa vēṇitē |

Meaning : At the time you churned the wavy sea agitated by the Mandāra mountain with Vāsuki wound round tightly rubbing the trees (on the mountain) with the solid earth around rattling, what had the great heroes (the devas) standing around on that day (when they lost their wealth due to curse of Dūrvāsa) to do ? Ranganātha ! My Lord who made the monkey warriors happy (by giving credit to them for winning the war in Lanka) ! clarify this specifically.

Notes : It is not, as in the last pācuram, that the Lord just obliged the self-seeking celestials by assuming the form of a tortoise to bear the mountain during the churning of the ocean. He did all other works too for them and still gave them credit for churning the ocean, evn as He gave credit, as Rāma, to the monkey warriors for winning the

war in Lanka. Āḷvār is lost in the ultimate limit of the benign nature of the Lord who has even come down as Ranganātha for the sake of His devotees.

Pacuram 22

Panḍumiṇṇu mēlumāyōr bālaṇāki ṇālamēḷum

Uṇḍumaṇḍiyālilait tuyiṇṇavādidēvaṇē !

Vaṇḍukiṇḍu taṇ tuḷāyalaṇkalāy kalandacīrp

Puṇḍarīkapāvai cērumārbā ! būminātanē |

Meaning : Primordial Lord existing before (creation), now (during creation), and later (during praḷaya) ! you repose (in praḷaya) on a banyan leaf as an infant after swallowing the seven worlds with relish, Lord of Dame Earth ! You have Dame of Lotus, the aggregate of all prosperity, in union on your chest decorated with cool garland of tulasi with bees hovering around.

Notes : This pācuram implies that for such a lofty Lord who has everything to give on account of the presence of Lakṣmī, His benignity towards those seeking Him as in the previous pācuram, is not a great effort.

Pācuram 23

Vāṇiṇṇattōr ciyamāy vaḷaṇda vāḷeyiṇṇavaṇ

Ūṇiṇṇattukirttalam aḷuttiṇāyulāya cīr

Nāḷiṇṇatta vēdanāvar nallayogiṇāl vaṇaṇgu

Pāḷnirakkaḍal kiḍanda padmanābhaṇallayē |

Meaning : As a pale and unique Lion, you pressed your finger nails at the lower flesh region of Hiranya with teeth of increased sharpness (increased valour due to the boons given by lesser deities), spreading your glories wide. Are you not Padmanābha reposing in the milk- white ocean worshipped by both the chanters of the Vēdas with four notes (Udātta, Anudātta, Svarita, and Praccayarūpa) and those graced by you (prepannas) ??

Notes : The Lord, Puruṣōttama, does not only change His form but His nature too from benignity to cruelty. He makes impossible things possible for the sake of His devotees like Prahlāda from the cruelty of His father Hiranya.

Pācuram 24

Gangainīrpayaṇḍa pādapaṇkayattu eṁaṇṇalē

Aṇṛaiālīcangutaṇḍu villum vāḷum ēṇḍiṇāy

Ciṅkamāya dēvadēva ! tēṇūlāvumeṇṇmalar

Mangaimannivālūmārpa ! āḷimēṇimāyaṇē |

Meaning : My Lord with lotus-like feet which created Ganga ! Bearer of the Discus, Conch, Mace, Bow, and sword in your hand ! Lord on whose chest flourishes the Dame of the blossomed lotus with hovering bees ! Such a God of gods who became a Lion ! Sea-hued Lord of wondrous feats !

Notes : The implication of the pācuram is that such a great Lord who dwells in the Transcendent in all glory came down just as a Lion to protect the devotees. Who can enjoy His glories in full other than the Nityasāris and Dame Lakṣmi ?

Pācuram 25

Varattiṇil cirattai mikka vāḷeyiṟṟ.umaṟṟ.avan

Urattiṇiṟṟ.karattai vaittukirtalattai ūṇṟ.ināy

Irattinīyidenṇa poy irattamaṇ vayiṟṟ.ullē

Kātta uṇkaruttai yāvar kāṇavallar kaṇṇaṇe |

Meaning : You kept your hands on the chest of the other one (Hiraṇya, the foe of Prahlāda) with sharp teeth (powwerful) who was intent on the boons (given to him by Brahma) and pressed your nail portions. How unreal that you (as Vāmana) begged (Mahābali), and the same earth that you begged, you had kept in your belly and protected (during praḷaya). Kaṇṇā ! who can conceive your intentions ?

Notes : One may believe that the Lord of such grand form as in the previous pācuram assumed the form of a lion for the protection of a pure and self-less devotee like Prahlāda. But, how can one reconcile that the Lord stooped so low as to beg of Mahābali for the sake of self-seeking Indra who wanted to safe-guard his position from Mahābali, and that too His own property, the Earth, which He protected by keeping in His belly during Praḷaya ? The same Lord of such great feats came down as Kṛṣṇa amidst the people !

Pācuram 26

Āṇiṇōḍu peṇṇumāki allavōḍunallavāy

Ūṇōḍōcaiyūṟ.umāki onṟ.alāda māyaiyāy

Pūṇipēṇumāyanāki poyyiṇōḍu meyyumāy

Kānipēṇumāṇiyāyk karanducenṟ.a kaḷvaṇē |

Meaning : Deceitful Lord ! who can perceive the acts you do stealthily, such as, your wondrous deeds, not one but many, of creating the feminine species along with the male species and the inanimate objects which are neither (instruments of enjoyment) with taste, sound, touch and other sense perceptions along with discernment, you being both false (to the inimicals) and true (to the devotees) as dark Kṛṣṇa protecting the cows and as the Brahmācāri (Vāmana) protecting the earth.

Notes : The Lord creates both temptations and redemption by means of sensuous objects and benevolent advice (dadāmi buddhiyōgam - I will give you divine knowledge) respectively. He is false to inimicals like Duryōdana and true to devotees like Pāṇḍavas. He deceived Mahābali by charming him by coming as a beggar to take possession of His own earth, and by showing a small-sized leg and measuring by a huge leg.

Pācuram 27

Viṅkaḍanda cōtiyāy viḷaṅku ṇāṇamūrttiyāy

Paṅkaḍanda tēcamēvu pāvanācanātanē

Eṇkaḍandayōkiṇōḍu irandu ceṇṇu māṇiyāy

Maṅkaḍanda vaṇṇa ninṇai yārmadikkavallarē |

Meaning : As the Effulgence in the Transcendent, your form radiates the qualities of Jñāna etc. (Jñāna, Bala, Aśvarya, Vīrya, Tejas and Śakti). Sovereign Lord who eradicates sins ! You stay in Paramapada beyond praise in the Vēdas. With infinite capability, the way you measured the worlds by coming as the Brahmācāri and begging, who can assess you ?

Pācuram 28

Paḍaittapārīḍantaḷandatuṇḍumiḷḷndu pauvanīr

Paḍaittaḍaittatil kiḍandu munkaḍainda perṟiyōy

Midaitta mālimālimān vilaṅgu kālanūr pukap

Paḍaittalam viḍutta pal paḍaitta taḍaṅkai māyaṇē |

Meaning : The wondrous Lord of broad hands with several weapons ! You have the glories of pulling out (as Varāha) measuring (as Vāmana) swallowing (in Praḷaya) and bringing forth (at the time of re-creation) the earth which you created, and of reposing on the water which you later bridged (as Rāma) and which you churned (at the time of obtaining nectar to the celestials). You wielded the weapons on the brute Māliman and the angered Māli sending him to Yama's abode.

Notes : This pācuram is completed by borrowing the last line of the following pācuram stating "can anybody think of you as having such and such nature ?"

Pācuram 29

Parattilum parattai āḍi pauvanīraṇaikkīḍandn

Urattilum oruttitaṇṇai vaittukandu adaṇṟiyum

Narattilum piratti nāta ! nāṇamūrttiyāyināy

Oruttarum niṇatutaṇmai inṇadenṇavallarē |

Meaning : As the one beyond the three types (baddha, Nitya and Mukta) of souls (which are beyond Prakṛti), you relish having the peerless Dame (Lakṣmi) in your chest and repose in the cosmic waters. Lord (of beings) !

Not contended with it, you take births among beings
You are the personification of knowledge (various ways of
protection such as scriptures, avatāras etc). Can anybody
say that your benign nature is such and such ?

Notes : The previous pācuram spoke of the mental resolve
of the Lord for the protection. This pācuram says how He
does it through the Vyūha forms and avatāras. The key
factor in His protective aspect is the presence of Lakṣmī
on His chest.

Pācuram 30

Vāṇakamummaṇṇakamum veṇṇuṇṇa ēḷkaḍalkḷum

Pōṇakam caidālilait tuyiṇṇa puṇḍarīkāṇē

Tēṇakam cai taṇṇaṇṇu malarttuḷāy naṇmālaiyāy

Kūṇakam pukatteṇṇitta koṇṇavilliyallayē |

Meaning : Lord ! your reposed, like a deep red lotus
in water, on a banyan leaf after swallowing the heavens
Earth, the seven mountain ranges and the seven seas. Are
you not the wielder of the bow (Rāma) wearing pleasingly
the garland of cool and fragrant tulasi soaked in honey,
who straightened the hunch (of Kubja) ?

Notes : In the previous pācuram, it was said that the
Lord came down amidst beings. In this pācuram, Āḷvā
experiences two aspects of His benign nature, namely, His
innocence as a babe on a banyan leaf and His valour as
Rāma.

Pācuram 31

Kālanēmikālanē ! kaṇakkilāda kīrttiyāy

Ūlāmēlumuṇḍu paṇḍu ōrpālanāya pāṇpaṇē !

Vēlai vēva vilvaḷaitta vēl ciṇattavīra ! niṇ

Pālarāya pattar cittam mutticeyyum mūrttiyē |

Meaning : Lord who, at one time, had the reputation of swallowing the seven worlds as an infant with your unlimited glories ! You were the god of death to Kālanēmi. The enraged Hero who subdued the sea by discharging the bow to dry it ! You turn the minds of the devotees that are disposed towards you to attain you.

Pācuram 32

Kurakkiṇappaḍaikoḍu kuraikaḍalin mīdupōy

Arakkaraṅkaraṅka veṅcaram turanda ādinī

Irakkaman koḍuttavaṛku irukka onṛ.uminṛ.iyē

Parakkavaittaḷandukaṇḍa padmapādaṇallayē |

Meaning : You are the foremost of the heroes who discharged the fierce arrows making the rākṣasas there wail, by crossing the roaring sea along with the army of the monkey hordes. Are you not also the Lord with lotus-like feet which pervaded and traversed the earth obtained from Mahābali by begging, without leaving any space for him ^{what} so ever ?

Notes : The Lord's ways are so inscrutable that He does benervolant acts glaringly like invading Lanka in all

fury and stealthily like taking possession of Earth from Mahābali.

Pācuram 33

Minṇiṛ,atteyiṛ,ṛ,orakkan vīḷa veñcaramturandu

Pinṇavar,kkaruḷ purindu aracalitta peṛ,riyōy

Nanṇirattōriṇ colēḷai piṇṇaikēḷva ! mannucīṛ

Ponṇiṛ,attavaṇṇanāya puṇḍarīkaṇallaiyē |

Meaning : You have the fame of shedding your grace on the next one (Vibhīṣaṇa) and making him king after discharging fierce arrows for the downfall of the Rāksasa (Rāvana) with sparkling teeth (of great valour). Spouse of devoted and unique Pinnai of gentle disposition with sweet tongue ! Are you not the Lord of eternal glories with a precious (like gold) body with pleasing complexion and eyes red like lotuses ?

Notes : He casts His grace on all devotees without any distinction of caste, colour, creed or sex as diverse as the rākṣasa Vibhīṣaṇa and the dame Pinnai.

Pācuram 34

Ādiyādiyādinī ōraṇḍamādiyādalāl

Cōtiyādacōtinī aduṇmaiyl viḷaṇṇināy

Vēdamāki vēḷviyāki viṇṇinōḍu maṇṇumāy

Ādiyāki āyaṇāya māyam eṇṇamāyamē |

Meaning : You are revealed in the authoritative scriptures as the effulgence beyond scrutiny because you create

everything in the cosmic egg as the three types of causes (sentient cause, material cause and auxiliary cause). After giving the Vēdas and the rituals there in, how astounding is the wondrous act that you, foremost in the Transcendental and mundane worlds, was born as the cowherd (Kṛṣṇa) ?

Notes : It is astounding that the Lord who is the sole cause of everything in all the worlds has, in addition to providing guiding authorities like the Vēdas and the sacrifices, was born as Kṛṣṇa for the sake of His devotees.

Pācuram 35

Ampulāvum mīṇumāki āmaiyāki āḷiyāy

Tampirāṇumāki mikkadu anbumikku adaṇṇiyum

Komparāvu nuṇmaruṅkul āyarmātu piḷḷaiyāy

Empirāṇum āyavaṇṇam eṅkolō ! emmīcane |

Meaning : Our sovereign Lord ! what benefaction that you, our Master, who are also your own master with the Discus (in Paramapada), also lovingly became the Tortoise and the Fish moving in water ? As if that was not enough, you also became the son of the cowherdess (Yasōda) with lips slender like a twig and a snake.

Notes : In the previous pācuram, it was said that the Lord took birth as Kṛṣṇa in the cowherd clan to be at hand to His devotees. Here, it is said that He took birth even as mere water creatures like Fish and Tortoise. Even then, at least He had freedom of movement. But, when He took birth as Kṛṣṇa, the son of Yasōda, He was admonished, beaten and bound.

Pācuram 36

Ātakatta pūṇmulai yacōdaiyāycci piḷḷaiyāy

Cādutait ōrpulḷatāvi kaḷḷadāya pēymaka!

Vīḍavaitta veyyakōṅgai eiya pālamudu ceydu

Āṭakakai mātarvāyamudam uṇḍadu enkoḷō |

Meaning : How marvellous that you, as the son of the cowherdess Yaśōda with gold ornaments on her breasts kicked (to destruction) Śakaṭāsura, killed the demones (Pūtana) who came as a false mother like the approach of an unsuspected bird (to kill its prey) by drinking the milk from her cruel breasts, and also savoured the lips of the dames of hands with gold ornaments.

Pacuram 37

Kāytta nīḷ viḷaṅṅīyutirttu etirnda pūṅkurundu

Cāyttu māpiḷanda kaittalatta kaṇṇaṇenbarāl

Āyccipālaiyuṇḍu maṇṇaiyuṇḍu veṇṇeyuṇḍu piṇ

Pēycci pālai yuṇḍu paṇḍorēṇamāya vamaṇā |

Meaning : They (gnostics like Vyāsa and Parāśara) say of Him who swallowed the Earth (during praḷaya) with the same ease that He consumed milk and butter from Yaśōda and also Pūtana's milk, and who was unique Varāha at one time and also Vāmana, that He is Kṛṣṇa who shed the ripe wood-apples from the tall tree (by aiming the calf Vatsāsura against it), who felled the twin kurundu tree facing each other and who split-in-two the horse kēśi with His bare palms.

Notes : In this pācuram, Āḷvār experiences the remarkable feats and innocent posture of Kṛṣṇa in the other avatāras of Infant on banyan leaf, Varāha and Vāmana.

Pācuram 38

Kaḍaṅkalanda vaṅkari maruppocittōr poykaivāy

Viḍaṅkalanda pāmbiṇmēl naḍampayinṛa nātānē

Kuḍaṅkalanda kūttaṇāy koṇḍalvaṇṇa taṇtuḷāy

Vaḍaṅkalanda māḷaimārpa kālanēmikālaṇē |

Meaning : Lord who was the god of death to Kālanēm ! You broke the tusks of the cruel elephant (kuvalayāpīḍa) in ruts. You danced on the hood of the poisonous Kālinga serpent in the deep recess of Yamuna. Lord of the nature of clouds ! with your chest decorated with the garland made of cool tulaṣi, you did the pot dance.

Notes : Āḷvār continues to enjoy the charming Kṛṣṇa-avatāra.

Pācuram 39

Ver. peḍuttu vēlainīr kalaṅkiṇāyatanṛiyum

Ver. peḍuttu vēlainīr varampukaṭṭivēlaicūḷ

Ver. peḍutta viñci cūḷilankai kattaḷitta nī

Ver. peḍuttu mārikātta mēvakaṇṇaṇallayē |

Meaning : You destroyed the command of Lanka fortified by ramparts, hill ranges (Triḱūṭaka) and sea by building bridge across the sea with huge boulders even as you

churned the cosmic waters by positioning the Mandāra Hill. Are you not the easily accessible Kṛṣṇa who protected against rains by lifting the Gōvardana Hill ?

Notes : Āḷvār continues to experience the protective aspects of Kṛṣṇāvatāra by bringing similarities therein with other avatāras as in Amṛtamanthan and Rāmāvatāra.

Pācuram 40

Āṇaikāttu orāṇaikoṇṇu atanṇi āyarpillaiyāy

Āṇaimeyttiyāneyuṇḍi anṇukunṇa monṇināl

Āṇaikāttu maiyarikkaṇ mātarartiṇattu muṇ

Ānaiyanṇu cenṇadartta māyam eṇṇa māyamē |

Meaning : You killed an elephant as the cowherd, even while you protected an elephant (Gajēdra at some other time). You grazed the cows and ate their ghee. You protected the cows that day (from Indra's fury) by means of a hill. You went and subdued the bulls that day before going to Nappinnai of eyes lined with collyrium. How astounding are your wondrous feats !

Pācuram 41

Āyaṇāki āyarmankai vēyatō! virumpiṇāy

Āya ! niṇṇaiyāvarvallar ? amparattoḍu imparāy

Māya ! māya mayekol atanṇinīvakuttalum

Māya māyamākkiṇāy unṇmāyamurṇum māyamē |

Meaning : Wondrous Lord ! who, among the celestials in the upper worlds and the gnostics over here, can unraval your all powerful nature if you, as the cowherd, preferred the bambo-like arms of Nappinnai ? They are ignorant of, your wondrous deeds. Even then, you created the various divisions (from Mahat, Ahamkāra etc down to the inert body in praḷaya) to eradicate ignorance . All your acts are totally incomprehensible.

Notes : The word “Māya” also means “knowledge” from the sūtra “Māyā vayūnam jñānam.” “Māya kōl - eradication of Māya” therefore means ignorance.

Pācuram 42

Vēṛicainda cekkarmēṇi nīraṇinda puṇṇaṭai

Kīṛutiṅgaḷ vaittavaṇ kaivaittavaṇkapāl micai

Ūrucenkurutiyāl nīṛaitta kāraṇam taṇai

Ēṛucenṛa ḍarta īcā ! pēcukūcaminṛiyē

Meaning : Sovereign Lord ! please tell (about your overlordship) without inhibition how you, who went and killed the bulls, were the cause of liquidating (th sin) of Śiva, of uncouth matted locks with a day-old moon on it, wearing ashes on the singularly detestable bloodied body, with the skull in his hands, by means of the red blood in your body.

Notes : In the last pācuram, it was said of the Lord. “Nī vakuttalum māyamākki” indicating that the various divisions like Mahat etc to inert bodies that He makes Himself, He destroys in praḷaya. Thus, He is both the Creator and Destroyer besides being the Protector also.

Siva is assigned a position subordinate to Him in the process of praḷaya.

The Lord is beyond the scriptures and even in His avatāra as Kṛṣṇa when His powers were manifest only partially, He was not subject to the dictates of the scriptures regarding the sins and merits (Janma Karma ca mē divyam - my births and deeds are divine). Therefore, even when He killed the seven bulls for the sake of Nappinnai, no sins were attached to Him. But, the pleasure - seeking Śiva in his celestial form, appropriately inauspicious due to his work of destruction, who is a creature of the scriptures, was subjected to the sin of "Brahmahatya" when a skull of Brahma which he pulled out, stuck in his hand. He was absolved of the sin by the Lord only when He filled the skull with His own blood.

Pācuram 43

Veñciṇatta vēḷaven maruppocittu uruttamā

Kaṇcanaik kaḍindu maṇṇaḷandu koṇḍakālaṇē !

Vaṇcanattu vanda pēycciyāvi pālu! vāṅgināy

Aṇcanatta vaṇṇaṇāya ādidēvaṇallaiyē |

Meaning : You killed the mighty and angry Kamsa after breaking the white tusks of the greatly angered elephant which was out of control. Your feet traversed the worlds (as Vāmana). Are you not the primordial Lord of the colour of collyrium who took the life by sucking the milk of the demoness who came deceitfully ?

Pācuram 44

Pālinīrmai cemponīrmai pāciyinpacumpuṟam

Pōlum nīrmai porpuḍaittaḍattu vaṇḍuviṇḍulām

Nīlanīrmai yoṇṇṇivai niṇṇaṇḍa kālam nāṇḡumāy

Māliṇ nīrmai vaiyakam maṇṇaittaḍu eṇṇa nīrmaiyo |

Meaning : What (ungrateful) nature of the worlds is it that it forgets the easy-accessible nature of the Lord who stands complete in all the four aeons (Kṛta, Trēta, Dvāpara, and Kali) with the (white) nature of milk (in Kṛta), with the colour of red gold (in Trēta), with the soothing colour of a sheet of moss (in Dvāpara) and with the blue colour of water lily hovering with bees with spread wings in a verdant tank (in Kaliyuga)

Notes : One's vision at any one time is limited by the particular quality prevailing in him at the time. In Kṛta yuga, Sāttvik nature prevails and, as its distinguishing colour is white, people see the Lord white. In Trēta yuga, the quality of "Rajas" dominates and people see the Lord as of red colour which is the characteristic colour of "Rajas." In Dvāpara yuga, there is an admixture of "rajas" and "tamas" and people are soothed by the sight of the Lord. In Kaliyuga, people are so unlucky as not being able to see the Lord as the quality of "Tamas" dominates, and He therefore exists in His true colour of blue like the lily flower.

Pācuram 45

Maṇṇuḷāy kol ? viṇṇulāykol maṇṇuḷē mayaṅki niṇṇu

Eṇṇum eṇṇakappaḍāykol ? Eṇṇamāyai ? niṇṇamar

Kaṇṇuḷāykol ? Cēyaikol ? aṇantanmēl kiḍanta em

Puṇṇiyā ! puṇantuḷāy alaṅkalam puṇitanē |

Meaning : Immaculate Lord reposing on Ananta wearing the garland of fresh tulasi leaves, who purifies me ! you move about on the earth. You move about in Paramapada. You do not materialise yourself to the bewildered people (with distorted knowledge) of this earth with their selfish intentions. How amazing ! you appear to your devotees in your true nature and are at a distance to others.

Notes : In the last pācuram, Āḷvār said that the people of this world are ungrateful to Him. In this pācuram, he is happy that he is not like them and that the Lord has revealed His true nature to Him.

Pācuram 46

Tōḍuperṛataṇtuḷāy alaṅkal āḍu cenniyāy

Kōḍupaṛṛi āḷiyēndi aṅciṛaippullūrtiyāl

Nāḍuperṛanaṇmai naṇṇamillai yēnum nāyiṇen

Vīḍu paṛṛu iṛappoḍum piṛappaṛukkumācolāi |

Meaning : Though I did not approach you when this earth was blessed by your appearing riding Garuḍa with lovely wings, wearing the Discus and the Conch on you with bunches of cool tulasi, rich with pollen, dangling on your fore-head, you please state a way to this lowly dog (who has realised that he is subservient to you) to attain Mōkṣa by ending death along with rebirth.

Notes : Āḷvār has realised his true nature as in the previous pācuram only lately even though the Lord makes

Himself available to all in avatāras etc. as typified by the appearance to Gajēndra by riding Garuḍa.

Pācuram 47

Kāroḍottamēṇi naṅga! kaṇṇa ! viṇṇinnātanē !

Nīṛiḍattaravaṇaikkidattiyenbar, aṇṇiyum

Ōṛiḍattaiyallai yellaiyillai eṇbarādalāl

Cēṛviḍattai nāyiṇeṇ terindiṛaiṇcumā colē |

Meaning : Our own Kṛṣṇa with a form pleasing like dark clouds ! Lord of Paramapada ! They say that you repose on Ādiśēṣa in the watery region. They also say that there is no single place which is out of bounds for you. Tell me, this lowly dog, of a meeting place where I knew I can reach you.

Notes : The Lord is in Paramapada. He is in the Milk-ocean in Vyūha form. He came down in avatāras in this world. He is everywhere without exception like the dahara regions in the hearts of beings. All these places are not approachable. Āḷvār asks Him to name a place where he can approach Him.

Pācuram 48

kuṇṇilnṇṇu vāṇirundu nīlkaḍalkiḍattu maṇ

oṇṇucenṇatonṇaiyuṇḍu adonṇiḍandu paṇṇiyāy

Naṇṇu cenṇanāḷa vaṇṇu! nalluyirpaḍaittu avarkku

Aṇṇudēvamaittu aḷitta ādidēvaṇallaiyē |

Meaning : You are the Primordial Lord who created sāttvik beings and protected them in those days (when they were affected by Rajas and Tamas qualities), in the benign era gone-by (in Varāha kalpa) of yours as the Boar when you pulled out the Earth, which you once swallowed, and where you came in specific places (in avatāras) from your states of standing at Tirumalai, sitting in Paramapada and reposing in the sprawling Milk-ocean.

Notes : As if in answer to Āḷvār's query in the last Pācuram, he is made known that the Lord is available in arcāvatāra in several places as typified by Tirumalai in this pācuram. Āḷvār recaptures, with gratitude the benign acts of the Lord in all places that He stays for the good of all, both god-inclined and otherwise.

Pācuram 49

Koṇḍaikoṇḍa kōdai mītu tēnūlāvu kūṇi kūṇ

Uṇḍaikoṇḍu araṅkavōṭṭi uḷmakīḷṇda nātaṇūr

Naṇḍai yuṇḍu nāraipēra vāḷaipāya nīlamē

Aṇḍaikoṇḍu keṇḍaimēyum antaṇīraraṅkamē |

Meaning : The place of residence of the Lord who felt elated driving-in the hunch of Kubja with bees hovering on the circlet of flowers on her locks. is Araṅkam (Śrīrangam) surrounded by lovely and cool water in which Vāḷai (a type of big fish-scabbard fish) jumps (in panic) and kendai (a type of small fresh water fish) rests in peace in the blue-lily plant for its protection while the crane, having eaten a crab, moves heavily.

Notes : This pācuram has another answer to Āḷvār's query in pācuram 47 that the Lord is available to him

in Śrīrangam also. Arcāvātāra is as potent as the Lord's other manifestations as He residing in Śrīrangam, is the same that came as Kṛṣṇa to remove the hunch of Kubja.

The pācuram has esoteric meaning as follows. The crane represents a materialistic being who enjoys worldly pleasures and consequently feels uncomfortable. The "Vaḷai" fish is like the upāsaka who is afraid of the cruelty in the worlds and therefore makes self-efforts. The "Kenḍai" fish is like the prapanna who resorts to the Lord who is tender and of blue colour like the lily, and feels safe. They typify the three qualities of tamas, rajas and sathva respectively.

Pācuram 50

Veṇṭiraikkaruṅkaḍal civandu vēva munṇornā!

Tiṇ tiṇal cilaikkaivāḷi viṭṭavīrcērumūr

Enticaikkaṇaṅgaḷum iṇaiṇciyāḍutīrttanīr

Vaṇḍiraitta cōlaivēli manṇucīr araṅkamē |

Meaning : The place of residence of the Hero (Rāma), who discharged the arrow from the steady and powerful bow once previously to make the dark sea with white foamy waves red with distress is Araṅkam of eternal glory surrounded by orchards humming with bees and water sanctified by the water-sport of the celestials of the eight directions coming to worship Him.

Pācuram 51

Carāṅkaḷaitturandu vilvaḷaittu ilankaimaṇṇavan

Ciraṅkaḷ pattaṇattu tiratta celvarmaṇṇuponṇiḍam

Parandu poṇṇirandunundi vandalaikkum vārpunaḷ

Araṅkamenbar, nāṇmukattayaṇ paṇinda kōyilē |

Meaning : They say that the precious place relished by the affluent Lord who cut off and felled the ten heads of the chief of Lanka by discharging arrows by bending the bow is Araṅkam, on the torrential Kāvēri which carries gold aplenty and throws it out (on the banks) by its waves, the Lord's temple worshipped by the four-faced Brahma.

Pācuram 52

Paṛṛaiuṛṛa muṛṛalyāṇai pōretirndu vandadai

Paṛṛiyuṛṛu maṛṛadaṇ maruppocitta pākaṇūr

Ciṛṛaiyirṛu muṛṛal mūṅgil mūṇṛutaṇḍar oṇṛiṇar

Aṛṛappaṛṛar cuṛṛivāḷum antaṇṭir araṅkamē |

Meaning : The town of the elephant-Tamer (Kṛṣṇa) who broke the tusks of the elephant besides going to it and entangling with it which had grown wild in dense forest, and which came head-on in combat, is Araṅkam with pleasant and cool water, where thrive in one group, prapannas circumambulating (the temple) and the tridaṇḍis carrying three mature bamboos with nodes like small teeth.

Pācuram 53

Mōḍiyōḍila ccaiyāya cāpameydi mukkaṇāṇ

kūḍucēṇai makkaḷōḍukoṇḍumaṇḍi veṇcamattu

Ōḍa vāṇaṇāyiram karamkaḷitta ādimāl

Pīḍukōyil kūḍunīr araṅka meṇṛa pēradē |

Meaning : The potent temple of the Primordial Lord who cut the thousand arms of Bāṇa when Śiva with his occult powers, though put to shame by Brahma's curse, who came with his army of Agni along with his son, pressed in battle, and ran away, goes by the name of Araṅkam with confluence of water.

Pācuram 54

Ilaittalaiccaranturandu ilaṅkai kaṭṭaḷittavan

Malaittalaippiṇḍiḷindu vandunundu candanam

Kulaittalaittirḷutterḷinda kunkumakkuḷambinḍu

Alaittoḷugukāviri araṅkam mēya aṇṇalē |

Meaning : The Lord, Śrī Rāma who destroyed the ramparts of Lanka by discharging arrows with tips flat like leaves is residing in Araṅkam worshipped by Kāvēri by its waves (as hands), with the sandalwood pushed into it (by the rainwater) and the paste of the pollen dust as the stem of the bunches (of flowers) are broken and thrown in it (by breeze and rain), it taking birth and descending from the Sahyādrī Hills.

Notes : Thus far, Āḷvār dealt with the protection to the devotees and the destruction of their enemies that He provides. This pācuram states the service rendered by them. It would appear that Śrī Rāma, after strenuous fight in Lanka, is coming and sleeping in Śrīrangam. The cool soothing Kāvēri is offering Him as unguent sandalwood and paste of pollen dust from flowers through the waves as its hands.

Pācuram 55

Maṇṇumāmalarkkiḷatti vaiyamaṅkaimaindaṇāy

Pinnum āyarpinnaitōḷ maṇampuṇartataṇṇiyum

Unnapādam eṇṇa cintai maṇṇavaittu nalgiṇāy

Ponṇicūḷaraṅkamēya pundaṛikaṇallayē |

Meaning : Besides being the spouse of the senior one (Lakṣmi) eternally lodged in the great lotus and Dame earth and also embracing the arms of Nappinnai, you showed deep love by making me resort to your feet eternally. Are you not the Lord, pleasing like the lotus, who is residing in Araṅkam surrounded by Kāvēri ?

Pācuram 56

Ilaṅkai maṇṇan aindodaintu paintalai ṇilattuk

Kalaṅka aṇṇu cenṇu koṇṇu veṇṇi koṇḍa vīraṇē !

Vilankunūlar vēdanāvar nītiyāna kēḷviyār

Vaḷaṅkoḷak kuḍandaiyuḷ kiḍanda mālumallayē |

Meaning : The victorious Hero who went that day and felled the ten powerful heads of the chief of Lanka and killed him ! Are you not the easily-accessible Lord reposing in Kuḍandai circumambulated by the chanters of the vēdas wearing the sacred thread, who imbibe scriptural discourses ?

Notes : With the six pācurams commencing with this, Āḷvāi pays homage to Kuḍandai (modern Kumbhakōṇam).

Pācuram 57

Caṅkutaṅku munḱai naṅkai koṅgaitaṅgal uṟṟavaṇ

Aṅkamaṅka aṇṟucenṟu aḍarterinda āḷiyāṇ

Koṅgutangu vārkuḷal maḍandai māṟkuḍainda nīr

Poṅgutaṅgu kuḍandaiyuḷ kiḍanda puṇḍarīkaṇē |

Meaning : The Lord, like the cluster of lotuses reposing in cool Kuḍandai where water is spilt over (by displacement) by the maidens, with long tresses retaining the fragrance from flower bunches, plunging in it, is the sea-hued Lord who went that day fought and threw, berefting him of limbs, Rāvaṇa who was interested in resorting to the breasts of the lady (Sīta) with bangles on her fore- arm

Pācuram 58

Maramkeḍanaḍa ndaḍarttu mattayāṇaimattakattu

Uramkeḍapuḍaittu ōṟkompocittukanda uttamā

Turaṅgam vāypilaṇdu maṇṇaḷanda pādā ! vēdiyar

Varamkoḷ okkuḍandaiyuḷ kiḍainda mālumallayē |

Meaning : Lord who crawled between to fell the trees (yamulārjuna) and excelled in fighting the elephant in ruts, made it powerless dancing over its head and broke its unusual tusks ! Are you not the easily accessible Lord reposing in Kuḍandai, to fulfil the desires of the vedik seers, who tore the mouth of the horse and whose feet traversed the worlds (as Vāmana) ?

Pācuram 59

Cālivēli taṇvayaḷ taḍankiḍangu pūmpoḷil

Kōlamāḍaniṭu taṇ kuḍandai mēya kōvalā !

Kālanēmivakkaraṇ karaṇmuraṇ ciramṁavai

Kālaṇōḍukūḍavirkunitta viṇkaivīraṇē |

Meaning : Cowherd Lord who stays in cool Kuḍandai with lovely, tall and huge mansions, cool fields fenced with red plants and flower gardens with wide moats ! The Hero with the bow who wielded the bow to send the heads of Kālanēmi, Dantavakra, Khara and Mura to meet Yama !

Pācuram 60

Ceḷuṇṇkoḷum perumpani poḷindiḍa uyarnda vēy

Viḷundularndu eḷundu viṇpuḍaikkum vēnkaṭattuḷ niṇṇu

Eḷundirundu tēṇ porundu pūmpoḷil taḷaikkōḷuṇ

Ceḷundaḍaṇkuḍandaiyuḷ kiḍandamālumallayē |

Meaning : Standing in Vēnkatam where tall bamboo trees falling down due to outpour of heavy water particles lashing intensely, dry up (in sunshine) and grow again reaching the sky, are you not the easily accessible Lord reposing in Kuḍanda, with flower gardens profuse with leaves and branches with the bees hovering around ?

Pācuram 61

Naḍanda kāḷgaḷ nondavō ? naḍuṇkañālamēnamāy

Idandamey kulungavō ? vilaṅgumālvarai ccuram

Kaḍanda kāl paranda kāvirikkaraikkūḍandaiyu!

Kiḍandavāru eḷundirndu pēcuvāḷi kēcavā |

Meaning : Were your legs weary of walking (as Rāma through forests) ? Did your body tremble by pulling out the shivering worlds as the Boar ? Kēcavā ! you get up and tell me why you are reposing in Kuḍandai on the banks of Kāvēri meandeering its way overcoming hills and dales ? May you live long (without weariness) !

Notes : It was said in pācuram 54, that Kāvēri was worshipping (nursing) the Lord. The reason is that the Lord felt tired walking in Ramāvātāra and His body ached by carrying the worlds in Varahāvatāra and He is therefore resting at Kuḍandai nursed by Kāveri. Kēcava - Āḷvār is asking Him to remove his distress (Kēcavaḥ klēṣa nāśanah - kēsava removes distress).

Legend has it that when Tirumaḷisai Āḷvār sang this pācuram, Lord Ārāvamudan at Kuḍandai did actually start getting up and Āḷvār stayed Him from doing so. The half-reposing posture of the Lord at Kuḍandai is attributed to this legend.

Pācuram 62

Karaṇḍamātupoykaiyu! karumpaṇaip perumpaḷam

Puraṇḍuvīḷa vāḷaipāy kuṟunguḍi neḍuntakāy !

Tiraṇḍa tōl iraṇiyaṇ ciṇaṅkoḷākamonṟaiyum

Iraṇḍu kūṟu ceydukanda ciṅkamenbaduṇṇaiyē |

Meaning : Lord of great excellence at Kurunguḍi where the fish jumps about (in panic mistaking) the big over-ripe, and black palm fruits falling down in the tank for the

waterfowls playing there ! It is only you that they say are the Lion (Narasimha) who felt satisfied (by helping a devotee like Prahlāda) by splitting in two in anger, the unusual body of Hiraṇya of sinewy arms.

Pācuram 63

Naṇṇirundu yōga nīti naṇṇuvarka! cintaiyu!

Cenṇirundu tīviṇaika! tīrtta dēva dēvaṇē !

Kuṇṇirunda māḍaṇīḍu pātakattum ūrakattum

Niṇṇirundu vēhkaṇaikkīḍandu eṇṇa nīrmaiye |

Meaning : Lord of Nityasūris who eradicates the sins of those who resort to you through the practice of yōga in appropriate posture etc by entering their hearts as the object of meditation ! How benevolent that you standing and sitting in Pātakam and Ūrakam with mansions like hills are lying down in Vēhka !

Pācuram 64

Niṇṇatu entai ūrakattu irundadu entai pāṭakattu

Anṇu vēhkaṇaikkīḍandadu eṇṇilāda munṇelām

Anṇunāṇ piṇṇandilēṇ piṇṇandapiṇ maṇṇandilēṇ

Niṇṇadum irundadum kiḍandadum eṇṇeṇṇuḷē |

Meaning : I did not exist in those days when my Master (came down and) stood at Ūrakam, sat in Pātakam and lay down in Vēhka. I was not (spiritually) born at that time. After getting the awareness that the Lord stands, sits and reposes in my heart, He is never out of my mind.

Pācuram 65

Niṛ.padam orveṛ.pakattu iruppum viṇkiḍappadam

Nar.perumtiraikkaḍaluḷ nāṇilāda munṇelām

Ar.putaṇ aṇantacayaṇaṇ ādibūtaṇ mātavaṇ

Niṛ.patum iruppadum kiḍappadam eṇṇeñcuḷē |

Meaning : The wonderous Lord, reposing on Ananta, the first cause of everything and the resort of Lakṣmi, who is enshrined in my heart standing, sitting and lying down, is the One who was standing in the unique Tirumalai Hills sitting in Paramapada and lying down in Milk- ocean lashed by waves in those bygone days when I was not there (in my true nature)

Pācuram 66

Inṛ.ucādal niṇṛ.ucādal aṇṛ.iyārum vaiyakattu

Inṛ.iniṇṛ.u vāḷ.talinmaikaṇḍum nīcar eṇkolō

Anṛ.upāraḷanda pādapōdai oṇṛ.ivāṇiṇmēl

Ceṇṛ.u ceṇṛ.udēvarāya irukkilāda vaṇṇamē |

Meaning : Even after seeing the futility of life sticking to these worlds where there is nothing but death in the womb or in the tenure of one's life span, why do contemptible people not resort to the feet, like lotuses which traversed the worlds that day (when Mahābali stuck to these worlds) and become Nityasūris by going to Paramapada by stages (arcirādi mārga) where there is no death.

Pācuram 67

Caṇḍamandalattinūḍu cenṛ.u vīḍupeṛ.ṛ.u mey

Kaṇḍu vīḍilāda kādal inpam nāḷumeiduvīr

Puṇḍarīkapāda puṇya kīrtti num cevimaḍuttu

Uṇdu nummuṛ.uvinait tuyaru! nīṅgi uymmiṇō |

Meaning : You will get eternal and unremitting bliss of devotion attaining Mōkṣa after reaching Paramapada through the region of the Sun. Prosper by hearing and imbibing the sacred glories of the lotus feet of the Lord, rid of the distress due to sins attaching to you.

Pācuram 68

Muttiṛ.attu vāṇiyattu iraṇḍilonṛ.am nīcarka!

Mattarāy mayaṅkukiṇṛ.atu iṭṭadiliṛ.ndu pōndu

Nattirattum uyvadu ōrupāyamillai uykuṛ.il

Totturutta taṇṭulāy nanmālai vāḷ.tti vāḷ.miṇō |

Meaning : In the course of reaping the rewards appropriate to the people affected by the three qualities (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas), contemptible people are attached to the two qualities (Rajas and Tamas). They are complacent as they are veiled (of their true nature as subservient to the Lord). There is no way that they can live righteous lives. They return to their positions after undergoing the allotted rewards. Therefore, live worthy lives by praising the benevolent and easily-accessible Lord with cool tulasi garland.

Pācuram 69

Kāṇilumuruppolār cevikkiṇātakīrttiyāy

Pēṇilum varumtara miṭukkilādatēvarai

Āṇamenṛaḍaintu vāḷum ādarkā! ! emmādipāl

Pēṇinum piṛappēnum piṇakku aṛukka kiṛṛirē |

Meaning : Ignorant people who resort, thinking of them as protectors, the lesser deities, with forms fierce to look at, who have no capacity to grant boons prayed for and whose glories are jarring on the ears ! Approach our primordial Lord who breaks the shackles called births by merely resorting to Him.

Pācuram 70

Kundamōḍu cūlam vēlka! tōmarṇka! taṇḍuvāl

Pandamānatēvarka! parandu vāṇakam ūra

Vandavāṇaṇiraiṇṇūru tōḷkalaittuṇittanāl

Andavanda ākulam amaraṇē aṛivarē |

Meaning : The lesser deities, burdened with javelins, trident, spear, lance club and swords, dispersed to their respective places in heaven on that day when the thousand arms of Bāṇa who came head-on, were cut. The celestials themselves are aware of their own commotions.

Pācuram 71

Vaṇḍulāvu kōdai mātar kāraṇattināl vekuṇḍu

Iṇṭavāṇaṇ īraiṇṇūṛu tōḷkalaittunitta nāl

Muṇṭaṇ nīṛaṇ makkaḷveppu mōḍi aṅkiōḍiḍak

Kaṇḍu nāṇivāṇaṇukku iraṅkiṇāṇ emmāyaṇē |

Meaning : It was only our Cowherd who felt ashamed (that the lesser deities were incapable of protecting their wards) and pity for Bāṇa when Śiva with ashes and matted locks, along with his sons and the fortynine Agnis with their heat and sorcery, ran away on that day when the thousand arms of Bāṇa who came in encounter, in great rage in connection with the affair of dame Uśa of locks hovering with bees, were cut.

Pācuram 72

Pōdilmaṅkaibutalak kiḷittidēvi aṇṛiyum

Pōdutaṅgu nāṇmukaṇmakaṇ avaṇmakaṇ colil

Mādutaṅku kūraṇ ēradūrtiyenṛu vēdanūl

Ōdukiṇṛaduṇmai alladillai maṛṛuraikkilē |

Meaning : The Dame on the lotus and Dame Earth are His spouses. That apart, the four-faced Brahma sitting in the lotus of His navel is His son. If we have to speak out, it is not that his (Brahma's) son, Śiva, has not got Pārvasi in one portion of his body (Ardhanārīśvara) and that he has in front the bull, which are true as the Vēdic scriptures say. Can anything more need be said of him ?

Notes : The very fact that the Lord is the spouse of both Lakṣmi and Dame Earth is enough to establish His supremacy. Besides this, Brahma who was born in the lotus of His navel is hence His son. Śiva is Brahma's son who as if imitating the Lord, has Pārvasi joined to him as

Ardhanārīśvara and he has a mere bull in front as against the Lord with Garuḍa, the personification of the Vēdas. Does Śiva come anywhere near the Lord in comparison ?

Pācuram 73

Marampodaccaramturandu vālivīḷa munṇor nāḷ

Urampodaccaramturanda umbarāḷi empīr.āṇ

Varamkuṛippil vaittavarku alāduvāṇa māḷilum

Nirampunīṭu pōkam ettiṛattum yārkkumillaiyē |

Meaning : There is no full and lasting bliss to anybody either in this earth or in Heaven except to those who meditate on the excellence of our Lord, the Master of the Nityasūris who discharged the arrow to pierce the trees and again to penetrate the body to slay Vāli at one time previously.

Notes : Full and lasting bliss is enjoyed only by the Nityasūris who are in the perpetual presence of the Lord. The self-seeking celestials like Indra and the humans are not so fortunate. But, if one meditates constantly on the glories of the Lord, he can expect to become a Nityasūri and enjoy the same bliss.

Pācuram 74

Aṛ.indaṛ.indu vāmaṇaṇ aḍiyiṇaivaṇangiṇāl

Cerindeḷ.undañāṇamōḍu celvamum ciṛ.andiḍum

Maṛ.inde.ḷ.unda teṇṭiraiyuḷ maṇṇumālai vāḷ.ttiṇāl

Paṛ.indeḷ.undu tīvinaikaḷ paṛ.ṛ.aṛ.utal pāṇmaiye |

Meaning : If you surrender at the twim feet of Vāmana with the awareness that He is both the goal and the means, enlightenment and devotion will spring up and flood you. If you eulogize the Lord reposing in the Milk ocean with abundant waves raised in it, the accumulated cruel sins will vanish in-toto as a natural consequence.

Pācuram 75

*Onṛ.ininṛ.u naṛ.ṛ.avam ceydu ūḷ.iyūḷ.itōṛ.elām
 Ninṛ.uninṛ.u avaṅkuṇaṅkaḷ ulliyuḷlamtūyarāyc
 Cenṛ.u ceuṛ.u tēvatēvar umparumparimparāy
 Anṛ.i enkaḷ ceṅkaṇmālai yāvarkāṇavallarē |*

Meaning : Who can realise our lotus -eyed Lord by merely cleansing one's mind imbibing (through scriptures) His great qualities even after observing, age after age without break, benign austerities observed as prescribed with oneness of purpose through the various stages (the seven stages of Vivēka, Vimōka etc) unless he proceeds further (by His grace) towards the Nityasūris by the progressively higher stages of Parabhakti, Parajñāna and Paramabhakti ?

Notes : The seven pācurams (75-81) commencing with this state that without His grace, it is not possible to reach Him with self effort, This pācuram speaks of the limitations of karmayōga.

Pācuram 76

*Punpulavaḷ.i aḍaittu arakkilaiccinai ceydu
 Nanpulavaḷ.i tir.andu ṇānanaṛ.cuḍ ar koḷī*

Enbileḷki neñcuruki uḷṇaṇindeḷundadu ōr

Anbilanṛi āḷiyānai yāvarkāṇavallarē ||

Meaning : Who can realise the Discus-wielding Lord by (merely) developing divine knowledge (only) by directing the senses in the right direction after closing all avenues of sensuality (pratyahāra) and the propensity towards them if not (followed) by rare devotion (paramabhakti) arising from maturity of thought with the heart melting in a withering body ?

Notes : This pācuram says that even Jñānayōga is of no avail in realising the Lord if His grace is not there.

Pācuram 77

Eṭṭumēṭṭumēṭṭumāy orēḷ^{ēḷum}umēḷ^uumāy

Eṭṭumūṇṛ.umonṛ.umāki ninṛ.a ādidēvaṇai

Eṭṭināya pēdamōḍu iṛ.aiñcininṛ.u avanpeyar

Eṭṭēḷuttum ōduvārkaḷ vallarvāṇamāḷavē |

Meaning : These who recite the eight letters (Aṣṭākṣara mantra) associated with His name (Nārāyaṇa) prostrating uniquely with the eight limbs (aṣṭāṅga praṇāmaṁ) the Lord (Nārāyaṇa) who is the cause of the worlds as the controller of the twenty four entities of prakṛti, as the inner controller of all beings in the seven regions, seven mountains and the seven seas and who is the Lord of the twelve Ādityas (representing the celestial forces), will be able to rule over Paramapada.

Notes : The Lord is to be worshipped with word (Aṣṭākṣara mantra), thought (meditating on the name Nārāyaṇa) and

deed by aṣṭāṅga praṇāma with the eight limbs (of mind, humility, absence of self esteem, head, two hands and two legs).

Pācuram 78

Cōrvilāda kādalāl toḍakkaṛa manattarāy

Nīrarāvaṇaikkidaṇda niṇmalaṇ nalaṅkaḷal

Ārvamōdu iṛiṇciniṇṇu avanpeyareṭṭeḷuttum

Vāramāka ōduvārkaḷ vallaṛ vāṇamāḷave |

Meaning : Those who chant the eight-lettered mantra associated with His name and worship ardently resorting to the salutary feet of the immaculate Lord reposing on the bed of Ādīśeṣa in the Milk-ocean, with unremitting devotion and a detached mind, are capable of ruling Paramapada.

Notes : The previous pācuram said that He is to be worshipped by word, thought and deed. In this pācuram an object of meditation namely, the Lord reposing on Ādīśeṣa in Milk-ocean, is given.

Pācuram 79

Pattinōḍupattumāy orēḷiṇōdu oronbadāy

Patṭiṇāl dicaikkaṇ niṇṇa nāḍupeṇṇananmaiyaṅ

Patṭiṇāya tōṇṇamōḍu orāṇṇalmikka ādipāl

Pattarāmavarkkalādu muttimuṇṇal ākumē |

Meaning : Will release (mukti) materialise to anybody other than those who are engrossed in the Lord who is in

the forefront with great ability to materialise severally (in avatāras) with the benevolence of begetting the fourteen worlds in the ten directions presided over by the ten deities, along with the seven notes (of the gamut) and the nine emotions (navarasa of the Nāṭyaśāstra) ?

Notes : If, as in the previous pācuram (78), one is asked how he can worship the Lord in the Milk-ocean whom only the citizens of Śvēta Dvīpa can approach, the answer in this pācuram is that He is the spring board of all avatāras in these worlds. Only those that know the esoterics of His avatāras are eligible for salvation. The seven notes of the gamut and the nine emotions here typify all things conducive to the souls that he provides. The ten deities are the eight directional deities beginning with Indra and Brahma at the top end of the seven upper worlds with Ananta at the bottom end of the seven lower worlds. The nine emotions (navarasa) are Śringāra, Hāsyā, Karuṇa, Vīra, Raudra, Bhayānaka, Bhīṭsa, Adbhuta and Śānta)

Pācuram 80

Vāciyākinēcaminṛi vandedurnda dēṇukan

Nācamāki nāḷulappa naṇmaicēraṇaṇkanikk

Vīcimēlnimirndatōḷil illaiyākkiṇāy kaḷaṛku

Ācaiyāmaṇṇaḷāl amararākal ākumē |

Meaning : Is it possible to be like Nityasūris for anybody who does not desire your feet who destroyed, by ending his days, Dhēnuka who came in enmity and encountered in the guise of a horse by throwing a palm fruit from your lovely extended arm ?

Notes : In the last pācuram, Āḷvār said that knowledge about the secrets of His avatāras is helpful towards salvation. In this pācuram, he gives a typical example of the Lord in destroying the enemies in Kṛṣṇāvatāra.

Pācuram 81

Kaḍaindu pāṛkaḍāl kiḍandu kālanēmiyaik kaḍindu

Uḍaindavālitaṇ taṇakku udavavandu irāmaṇāy

Miḍainda ēḷmarangaḷum adankaveydu vēṅkaṭam

Aḍainda mālapādamē aḍaindu nāḷum uyyumiṇō |

Meaning : Prosper for ever resorting to the feet of the Lord reposing in the Milk-ocean who is staying in Vēṅkaṭam after churning the Milk-ocean and killing Kālanēmi, and who came as Rāma to help troubled Sugrīva the brother of Vāli, by felling down the seven clustered trees.

Notes : All along, Āḷvār has been asking people to resort to the Lord in Vyūha and avatāras for salvation. But, Vyūha's unapproachable and avatāras are long past. He says here that the same Lord is in Vēṅkaṭam.

Pācuram 82

Ettiṛattum ottuṇṇu uyarnduyarndu peṇṇiyōy

Muttiṛattumūrinīr arāvaṇaittuyiṇṇa niṇ

Pattuṛutta cintaiyōḍu niṇṇa pācamviṭṭavārku

Ettiṛattum iṇbam inkum ankum enkum ākumē |

Meaning : From your highly exalted position of reposing on Ādiśeṣa in the cosmic waters of three types (flowing water,

spring water and rain water), you mix intimately in all the states (with celestials, animals, human and stationary beings) Devotees who imbibe this feature after severing all bonds will attain the highest form of bliss here (in these worlds), there (in Paramapada) and else where (in transit the ascirādi way).

Notes : This pācuram states that the prapannas and Nityasūris are always in supreme bliss. Parabhakti is the highest stage of an upāsaka (who makes self-effort) and the first stage of a prapanna. Thus far, Āḷvār was giving advice to the outside world. From this pācuram onwards, he relates his own experience.

Pācuram 83

Maṭṭulāvu taṇṭuḷāyalaṅkalāy ! polaṅkaḷai

Viṭṭu vilādapākam viṇṇil naṇṇiyēr.inum

Eṭṭinōdiraṇḍeṇum kayir.ināl maṇantaṇaik

Kaṭṭi vīḍilāduvaitta kādalinpamākumē |

Meaning : Lord with the garland of cool tulasi howering with bees ! The uninterrupted love generated from tethering the mind by the rope called devotion at your lovely feet will be more pleasing than the unceasing bliss of ascending and reaching Paramapada.

Notes : Even in this misery-ridden samsāra, if one is able to love the Lord incessantly with pure devotion, it is productive of bliss obtainable in Paramapada.

Pācuram 84

Pinpirakkavaittanāṅkol ? Anṛ.ininṛ.utankaḷaṛ.ku

Anpuṛ.aikka vaitta nāl arindanāṅkol ? āḷ.iyāṇ

Tantīṛ.attoranpilā aṛ.ivilāda nāyinēṇ

Entīṛ.attil eṅkol ? empirāṇ kuṛ.ippil vaittadē ||

Meaning : Does He want to make me born again (after this life) ? Has He a known date for my love towards His feet to ripen (paramabhakti) and halt (the birth -cycle) ? What does He make of me, the lowly dog, who is not even aware that he has no (requisite) love for the glories of the Discus-wielding Lord ? What are the intentions of my Master ?

Notes : It is not that Āḷ.vār is lacking in jñāna (pirandapin marandilēn - After enlightenment, I have not forgotten) or in God-love (naḍandakāl nondado - have your feet been aching after walking). But, self-effort is of no avail with the Lord and it is only His unsolicited grace that matters.

Pācuram 85

Naccarāvaṇaikkidaṇda nāta ! pādapōdiṇil

Vaitta cintaivāṅkuvittu nīṅkuvikka nī inam

Meyttan vallaiyādalāl aṛ.indanaṇ niṇ māyamē

Uyttuniṇmayakkiṇil mayakkal eṇṇai māyaṇē |

Meaning : Lord reposing on the poisonous Ādisēṣa ! You have truly the capacity to even reject the devotion at your feet which you created after weaning me. I am quite aware

of your illusory acts. 'Wondrous Lord ! Save me from your instruments of sensualities. Do not delude me.

Notes : All along, Āḷvār too was wallowing in these worlds. At some stage, the Lord graced him with devotion at His feet. The same fiercely-independent Lord is also capable of making Āḷvār devoid of that devotion. Āḷvār appeals to the Lord not to do so.

Pācuram 86

Cāḍu cādupāḍaṇe ! calamkalanda poykaivāy

Āḍaraviṇvanpiḍar naḍampayinṛa nātāṇē

Kōḍunīḍukaiya ! ceyyapādam nāḷumuḷḷiṇāy

Vīḍaṇāka meyceyāda vaṇṇam eṇkol ? kaṇṇaṇē |

Meaning : The Lord with feet which killed Śakatāsura ! Lord who danced on the powerful hoods of the swaying Kālinga in the Yamuna with turbird waters ! Lord with hands eternally holding the Conch ! Kriṣṇa ! How is it that you have not made me attain salvation even though I have perpetually resorted to your lotus feet ?

Notes : In the last pācuram, Āḷvār feared that the Lord may deprive him of his devotion at His feet. This fear arose because, the Lord whose creed is to destroy all opposing forces had not yet freed Āḷvār of his contact with the worlds to attain salvation.

Pācuram 87

Nerṛiperṛakaṇṇaṇ viṇṇinatanōḍu pōdinmēl

Narṛavattunātatanōḍu marṛumuḷḷa vānavar

Kaṛṛapeṛṛiyāl vaṇaṅkupāda ! nāta ! vēda ! niṅ

Paṛṛalālorpaṛṛu maṛṛaduṛṛilēṇ urraikkilē |

Meaning : The Lord whose feet are resorted to by Śiva with eye on the forehead, the chief of the celestials (Indra), and Brahma of the lotus with benign deeds (of ushering the worlds) along with all the other celestials learnt from their experience ! My Master ! The personification of the Vēdas ! I tell you that apart from you I do not know of any other resort for me.

Notes : In the previous pācuram, Āḷvār said that he has resorted to His feet. In this pācuram, he says that he resorts only to His feet (ananyārha śēṣatra) and no body elses, as even the celestials who are worshipped by others, resort to Him only.

Pācuram 88

Vellaivēlai veṛpunāṭṭi vellaiyiṛṛarāvalāy

Aḷḷ alākaḍainda aṇṛu aruvaraikku orāmaiyaṅ

Uḷḷanōykkalṭīrmarundu vānavarkaḷitta em

Vaḷḷalāraiyaṇṛi maṛṛordaivam nāṇ madippanē |

Meaning : Will I regard any god other than our generous Lord who was an anti-dote to the distresses of the celestials and protected them by not only churning intensely, the Milk-ocean by planting the mountain (Mandāra) and winding the white fanged serpent (vāsuki) round it but also becoming a tortoise below the mountain ?

Notes : In the previous pācuram, Āḷvār said that, ultimately, all celestials worship Him only. In this pācuram,

he says that the Lord goes to the farthest extent to rescue them from their distresses.

Pācuram 89

Pārmikuttabāram muṇḍoḷiccuṇvāṇ aruccuṇan

Tērmikuttumāyamākki niṇṇuḥkonṇu venṇi cēr

Māratarkku vāṇ koduttu vaiyam aivarpāladām

Cīrmikutta niṇṇalāl ordaivam nāṇ madippanē |

Meaning : Will I regard any god other than you of exalted glory who gave the kingdom to Pāṇḍavas and sent the great charioteers (like Duryōdhana) to heavens by killing and conquering on the unparalleled chariot of Arjuna in order to remove the excessive burden on the earth ?

Notes : The Lord went to greater extent towards the protection of His devotees like Pāṇḍavas than even towards the celestials.

Pācuram 90

Kulankaḷāya īriraṇḍil onṇilum piṇḍandilēṇ

Nalankaḷāya naṇḍakalaikaḷ nālilum naviṇṇilēṇ

Pulaṇḍalaṇḍum venṇilēṇ poṇḍiyilēṇ puṇḍita ! niṇ

llaṇḍkupāḍamaṇṇi maṇḍorpaṇḍilen emīcanē ! |

Meaning : I am not born in any one of the four castes. (as a consequence), I have not learnt any of the four benign and beneficial vēdas, I have not conquered the five senses. I am devoid of righteousness. Immaculate Lord

(who purifies me) ! My Master ! I have not resorted to anything except your lustrous feet.

Notes : In the last pācuram, Āḷvār said that he had no goal except Him. In this pācuram, he says that he has no means to reach the goal except Him.

Pācuram 91

Paṇṇulāvu meṇmoḷip paḍaittaḍaṅkaṇāḷporuttu

Enṇila arakkarai neruppiṇāl nerukkiṇāy

Kaṇṇalāl orkaṇṇilēṇ kalanda cuṟṟam maṟṟilēṇ

Enṇalāda māya ! niṇṇai enṇu! nīkkal enṟumē |

Meaning : You killed by the fiery arrows countless members of rākṣasas for the sake of Sīta of broad eyes endowed with soft and sonorous speech. Apart from you, I have no support. I have no relations surrounding me. Lord of countless wonders ! Do not depart ever from me.

Notes : Āḷvār said previously that the Lord is Himself the means. But then, there are a lot of obstacles before Āḷvār is set on the track. Āḷvār appeals to the Lord in all humility to remove them even as the all-endowed Sīta too depended upon Him to remove all her troubles in Aśōkavana.

Pācuram 92

Viḍaikkulangaḷ ēḷaḍarttu veṇṟi vēṟkaṇ mātarār

Kaḍikkalandatōḷ puṇarnta kāliyāya ! vēlainīr

Paḍaittu aḍaittu adilkidaṇtu muṇkaḍandu niṇṭaṇakku

Aḍaikkalampukunda enṇai aṇcalenṇa vēṇḍumē |

Meaning : Cowherd Lord who embraced the fragrant arms of the youthful Dame (Nappinnai) of spear-like eyes winning her by subdueing the group of seven bulls ! I implore you, who previously created the cosmic waters, bridged it, churned it (for the sake of celestials), and reposed therein, to say "Do not be afraid (mā śuca)" to ma who has surrendered unto you.

Notes : It is all right for Āḷvār to implore the Lord to ward off all his troubles and to take him to Him. But, what does he expect the Lord to do just now and what is his own part ? Āḷvār says in this pācuram that he has totally surrendered himself at His feet and He has just to say not to be afraid even as He told Arjuna in the battlefield.

Pācuram 93

Curumparaṅkutaṇṭuḷāy tutaindalarndapādāmē

Virumbiniṇṭṭiṇṭa aiṇcuvaṇṭku iranku aranka vāṇṇaṇē

Karumbirunda kaṭṭiye ! kaḍalkiḍanda kaṇṇaṇē !

Irumparanka veñcaran turanda villirāmaṇē |

Meaning : The celestial Lord at Araṅkam, compassionate to those who incessantly long to worship your blossomed feet thickly covered with cool tulasi with bees inside ! Sugar in the sugar-cane ! Kṛṣṇa reposing in the Milk-ocean ! Rāma with the bow discharging fierce arraows penetrating the steely bodies of the rākṣasas !

Notes : In the previous pācuram, Āḷvār asked Him to remove his fear. The fear arises because he may stray from his devotion towards other things. This fear gets

automatically removed if the Lord continues to attract Āḷvār beurteching presence as in Śrīrangam.

Pācuram 94

Ūṇilmēvāvinī uṟakkamōḍu uṇarcci nī
 Āṇimēya aindum nī avarṟul ninṟa tūymai nī
 Vāṇi ṇōḍu maṇṇum nī vaḷaṅkaḍarṟayanum nī
 Yānum nī adaṇṟi empiraṇum nī irāmaṇē |

Meaning : You are the ordainer of life in the body. You cause ignorance along with enlightenment. You are the five purifying products (pañcagavya) from the cows. You cause the purifying action in them. You promote both worldly and other-worldly lives. You are the essence of the mighty sea(which yields gems etc which promote worldly life). Rāma ! Not only am I under your control, you are my sole master.

Notes : If the Lord would ask Āḷvār, All right, I am here in Śrīrangam. You get yourself detached from worldly attractions. Āḷvār says in this pācuram that everything good and bad are totally under the control of the Lord and without His compassion and grace, nothing will move.

Pācuram 95

Aṭakkarum puḷaṅkaḷaindaḍakki ācaiyāmavai
 Toḍakkaruttu vandu niṇtoḷiṟkaṇ ninṟa eṇṇai nī
 Viḍakkardi meyceyādu mikkorācaiyākkilum
 Kaḍal kiḍanda niṇṇalāl orkaṇṇilēn em aṇṇalē |

Meaning : My Sole Master ! Even if you divert my mind on other things and do not fructify the salvation aspired for by me who stands in servitude to you by suppressing the propensities towards other temptations after subduing the five unruly senses, I have no other resort except you who is reposing on the Milk-ocean.

Notes : After acknowledging the Lord as the sole means in the last pācuram, Āḷvār expresses his total helplessness in this pācuram.

Pācuram 96

Vārambilāda māyaimāya ! vaiyamēḷum meymaiyē

Vārambilūḷiyēṭtilum vārambilāda kīrttiyāy !

Vārambilāda palpiṟappu aṟuttuvandu niṅkaḷal

Porundumādirunda nī varamcey puṇḍarīkanē |

Meaning : Wondrous Lord with innumerable illusory acts ! Your glories are inexhaustible even if all the seven worlds praise your greatness in countless aeons. Lotus Lord ! Bless me to attain through arcirādi way and stay at your feet correcting me after ending the several never-ending births.

Notes : In this pācuram, Āḷvār defines his goal, namely, to wean him from worldly temptations, end the birth cycle and to attain His feet through the arcirādi way.

Pācuram 97

Veyyavāḷiṅcankutaṇḍu villum vāḷum ēnducīrk

Kaiya ! ceyya pōdilmādu cērum mārpa ! nātaṇē !

Aiyalāya ākkainōy aṟuttuvandu ninṇaḍaindu

Uyvadōrupāyam nī eṇakkunalka vēṇḍumē |

Meaning : Lord with the glory of holding, in your hands, the fierce Discus, Conch, Mace, Sword and Bow ! Lord united with the tender Dame on the red lotus in your chest ! You must bestow a plan to save me by ending the distresses in the body arising from plegm and to attain you.

Notes : In the last pācuram, Āḷvār submitted his goal to the Lord. If the Lord should tell him, "All right, start the process towards your goal," Āḷvār states in this pācuram that he has no part in it as the Lord's weapons are there to overcome all the obstacles, and Lakṣmi on His chest is there to take care of all the beneficent acts towards his goal.

Pācuram 98

Maṟamtuṟandu vañcam māṟṟi ainpulankaḷācaiym

Tuṟandu ninṇaṇ ācaiye toḍarndu ninṟa nāyiṇēṇ

Piṟandiṟandu pēriḍarc cuḷikkaṇiṇṟu nīnkumā

Marandiḍādu maṟṟenakku māya ! nalka vēṇḍumē |

Meaning : Bereft of stamina and conceits and discarding the propensity towards the five sense objects, this dog is standing at your door absorbed wholly in love towards you. Wondrous Lord ! You must grace me, without fail to absolve me from this whirlpool of distresses arising from births, deaths and other things.

Notes : Āḷvār continues to express his abject helplessness like a stray dog waiting at the door for the crumbs.

Pācuram 99

Kāṭṭināṇ ceyvalvinai payandaṇā!maṇantaṇai

Nāṭṭuvaittu nallavalla ceyyaveṇṇiniṇāreṇa

Kāṭṭatanṇiennadāvi pinṇaikē!va ! ninṇoḍum

Pūṭṭivaitta enṇai ninṇu! nīkkal pūvaivaṇṇaṇē |

Meaning : Spouse of Pinnai ! Lord of the hue of atasi flowers ! Without forsaking, you must keep me, who is wholly dedicated to you, with you negating the saying that they (hordes of Yama) intend nothing good, bent as they are only on the fixity in their minds about the fruition of the cruel sins indicated by my past deeds.

Notes : If, as petitioned by Āḷvār in the last pācuram, the Lord says that He will take care of them but, what about the hosts of sinscommitted by Āḷvār in his innumerable previous births, Āḷvār points out to the mediation of Pinnai by His side and His assurance. “Sarvapāpēbhō mōkṣayiśyami” I will absolve you of all sins.

Pācuram 100

Piṇappinōḍu pēriḍarc cuḷikkaṇ ninṇum nīnkumahtu

lṇappavaitta ṇaṇanīcaraik karaikkoḍēṇum

Peṇṇaṇ kariya ninṇapāda pattiyānapācaṇam

Peṇṇaṇ kariya māyaṇē ! eṇakku nalka vēṇḍumē |

Meaning : Wondrous Lord who cannot be known by others (not graced by you) ! Please grace me with the prop of bhakti at your feet not attainable by others, the highlight (of the vēdānta) to reach the shore (of the sea of samsāra)

the core truth concealed to the distorters of knowledge, to escape 'from the whirlpool of distresses inherent in birth cycles.

Notes : Āḷvār asks the Lord to grant him Paramabhakti which is a requisite for all that he prayed for before.

Pācuram 101

Irاندuraippaduṇḍuvāḷi ēmanīrniṛattamā |
Varamtarum tirukkuṛippil vaittadākil maṇṇu cīr
Paranda cintai yonṛinīṇṛu ninṇapādapaṅkayam
Nirantaram niṇaippadāka nī niṇaikka vēṇḍumē |

Meaning : Hallelujah to my Master of the nature of the huge sea ! I have a submission to make. If you have an intention of granting me an everlasting and excellent boon, please consider that the awakening in my mind at your lotus feet is steadfast enabling me to meditate for ever without break.

Notes : Āḷvār prays that the devotion generated in him after controlling the sense organs should be for ever.

Pācuram 102

Viḷvilāḍakādalāl viḷaṅgu pādapōḍil vaittu
Uḷḷuvēṇatūṇanōy oḷikkumāḍeḷikka nīr
Paḷḷimāya ! paṇṛiyāya venṛivīra ! kuṇṛinaḷ
Tuḷḷunīr varampucaida tōṇṛal ! oṇṛucolliḍē |

Meaning : Miraculous Lord reposing on the roaring waters ! Hero who conquered Hiraṇyākṣa as the Boar ! Lord who

appeared as Rāma bridging the water lashing the Trikūṭa Hills ! Tell me a word (of solace) to alleviate the distress due to the short comings (due to contact with samsāra) in me who has unremitting love to your lustrous lotus feet.

Notes : Āḷvār seeks an assuring word from the Lord to end his connection with the mundane worlds as a prelude.

Pācuram 103

Tirukkalandu cērum mārpa ! tēvatēvatēvaṇē !

Irukkalandavēdanīti ākiniṇṇa ninmalā

Karukkalandakāḷamēka mēṇiyāya ninpeyar

Urukkalandōḷivilādu uṇaikku māṇu uraiceyē |

Meaning : Lord with Lakṣmī poised on the chest in union ! Lord of both celestials (like Brahma) and the Nityasūris ! The immaculate Lord who stands as the very essence of the Vēdas with Rks ! Make it an accomplished fact that I praise, without respite, the names along with the lovely form of you who, as Kṛṣṇa is like the heavily-laden dark clouds.

Notes : Whether Āḷvār is in this world or in Paramapada, he must meditate, incessantly, the names, forms and glories of the Lord.

Pācuram 104

Kaḍuṅkavandaṇ vakkaran karaṇ muraṇ ciramavai

Iṭandu kūṇuceyda palpaḍaittaḍakkai māyaṇē !

Kiḍandirundu ninṇiyaṅkupōdum ninṇapoṇkaḷal

Toḍarndu vīlvilādadu ōrtoḍarcci nalga vēṇḍumē |

Meaning : Astounding Lord with broad hands holding several weapons which felled down the heads and tore into pieces the cruel Kabhanda, Aṣṭāvakra, Khara and Mura ! You must make it incessant that I plunge headlong, without break, at your precious feet while I am sleeping, sitting, standing or moving (at all times)

Notes : As it is the Lord's creed to remove all obstacles, Āḷvār pleads Him to do so for him so that he can plunge himself and be steeped in his devotion to the Lord.

Pāuram 105

Maṇṇaiyuṇḍumil₁ndu piṇ₂ irandukoṇḍaḷandu maṇ₃

Kaṇṇulalladillai yeṇ₁ru veṇ₂ru akālamāyiṇāy

Paṇṇaiveṇ₁ra incolmankai koṇkaitangupaṇkayak

Kaṇṇa ! niṇṇavaṇṇamalladillai eṇṇum vaṇṇamē |

Meaning : Lord, conqueror of time, who swallowed the worlds which you, at one time begged, took possession and strode, saying that it is not there if it is not graced by you ! Lord with your lotus eyes resting on the breasts of the youthful Dame (Lakṣmi) with pleasant speech which puts even music to shame ! There is no other beauty worth considering other than yours.

Notes : When the Lord of such great qualities is there with the compassionate Lakṣmi as the mediator, there is no reason for Āḷvār to make any self-effort. At the same time, this enthralling setting quickens his anxiety to reach the Lord.

Pācuram 106

Kaṛuttēdirndakālanēmi kālaṇḍōḍukūda anṛu

Aṛutta āḷicankutaṇḍu villumvāḷum ēndināy !

Toṛukkalanda ūnamahdu oḷikka anṛkunṛam muṇ

Porutta niṇpukaḷkkaḷāl ornēcamiḷai nencamē |

Meaning : Lord with Discus, Conch, Mace, Sword and Bow which cut asunder Kālanēmi who encountered with anger and sent him to keep company with Yama ! My mind is not engaged in anything except your glories of lifting in time that day Gōvardhana hill showing that there was no loss to your transcendental nature when you were with the cattle.

Notes : Besides meditating on the beauty of His form, Āḷvār is also contemplating on the trait of the Lord by which He is ever ready to protect the innocent ones.

Pācuram 107

Kāyaciṇatta kācimanṇaṇ vakkaraṇ pavuṇḍiraṇ

Māciṇatta mālimān cumālikēcitēṇukaṇ

Nācamuṛṛuvīḷa nāḷkavarnda niṇkaḷarkaḷāl

Nēcapācam ettiṛattum vaittiḍēn emuīcāṇē |

Meaning : Our Master ! Make me bound by the bonds of love in all ways at your feet which ended the days, by felling down and killing the worked-up Rāja of Kāśi, Dantavakran, Poundrika, the angered Māli, Māliman, Sumāli, Kēśi and Dhenukan.

Notes : Āḷvār again asserts that he will not resort to any but His feet which destroyed all hostile forces.

Pācuram 108

Kēḍil cīrvarallaṇāyk keḍumvarattayaṇ aran

Nāḍinōḍu nāṭṭamāyirattaṇ nāḍunaṇṇinum

Vīḍadāṇapōkameydi vīṇṇirunda pōdilum

Kūḍum ācaiyalla tonṇu koḷvaṇō ? kuṇippilē |

Meaning : Will I be reconciled mentally with anything other than being united with you even if I stay enjoying the pleasures available in heaven after reaching the combined kingdoms of Brahma of prosperity devoid of destruction (creation), of Śiva of destruction and Indra of the thousand eyes ?

Notes : If the Lord should feel that the real reason that Āḷvār is seeking Paramapada to enjoy the power and pelf available there, Āḷvār assures Him in this pācuram that his only object is service at His feet.

Pācuram 109

Curukkuvāraiṇṇiyē curuṇkiṇāy curuṇkiyum

Perukkuvārai yinṇiyē perukkamaidu peṇṇiyōy !

Cerukkuvārkaḷ tīk kuṇangaḷ tīrttadēvadēvanenṇu

Irukuvāy munikkaṇangaḷētta yānumēttinēṇ |

Meaning : You have the loftiness of contracting yourself (as Vāmaṇa, due to your own volition) unlike the pigmies

(due to lack of merit, such as, worms etc.) and even after contracting, you assume a sweaping form unlike the huge beings (with accumulated merit as also due to accident of birth). I also praise Him whom the savants, the chanters of the Vedas praise, the God of gods who ended the arrogant and cruel natured people (like Mahābali).

Notes : If the Lord should tell “Āḷvār ! All along you have been praising me. Is it not self-effort ?” Āḷvār says in this pācuram that he is praising purely for the sake of praising and utilising the time usefully unlike the savants who praise Him with pure hearts.

Pācuram 110

Tūyanāyūm anṛiyum curumpulāvu taṇ tuḷāy

Māya ! ninṇaināyīṇēn vaṇankilvāḷttum īdelām

Nīyum ninṅuṇṇippinil poruttu nalku vēlai nīr

Pāyalōdu pattar cittam mēya vēlai vaṇṇaṇē |

Meaning : Wondrous Lord with cool tulasī with bees hovering ! Lord of the nature of the sea on the bed of cosmic waters ! captivating the minds of the devotees ! Grace me forbearing all these, the worship and benediction to you by this stray dog whether pure or impure.

Notes : In the previous pācuram, Āḷvār said that he too was praising Him whom the savants praise. The comparison may not be appropriate as the savants were pure due to austerities all their lives whereas Āḷvār was all along steeped in “I-ness” and “mine-ness.” He craves the Lord’s grace to condone him.

Pācuram 111

Vaitu ninṇai vallavā paḷittavarkkum māṇḷipōr

Ceyduniṇṇa ceṇṇattīyal vendavarkkum vandunṇai

Eydaḷādum enpar ādalāl emmāya ! nāyinēṇ

Ceyda kuṇṇam naṇṇamākavēkoḷ ṇālanātaṇē |

Meaning : They (scriptures) say that even those (foes) who insult you and cast aspersions on your prowess (like Śiśupāla) and are scorched by the fire of your anger by fighting proxy wars are able to resort to you. Our wondrous Lord ! Lord of the worlds ! consider therefore the insults heaped by this stray dog as praises.

Notes : While praising as in last pācuram, it was possible that Āḷvār, due to ignorance, might have actually insulted Him too. Āḷvār prays that He treat them as praises.

Pācuram 112

Vāḷkaḷāki nāḷkaḷ cella nōymai kuṇṇi mūppeydi

Māḷunāḷadādalāl vaṇaṇki vāḷttu eṇṇēṇcamē

Āḷadākum naṇmai eṇṇu naṇ kuṇarndadaṇṇiyum

Mīḷvilāda pōkam nalka vēṇḍum mālapādamē |

Meaning : My mind ! with an uncertain day of departure, days are passing like a sword dangling on the head. Old age is catching with the body depleted by diseases. Consider, therefore, that it is the right conduct to worship and praise, with the service itself as beneficent, the Lord's feet which will grant us everlasting bliss.

Notes : One is not certain when this life will end. In this pācuram, Āḷvār exhorts his mind to worship the Lord to pass the time usefully.

Pācuram 113

Calan̄kalanda ceñcaṭaik kaṛuttakan̄tan veṇṭalai

Pulaṅkalaṅgavuṇḍa pāḍakattan̄ vaṇṭuyirkeḍa

Alaṅkal mārvil vācanīr koḍuttavan, adutta cīr

Nalankal mālai naṇṇum vaṇṇam eṇṇum vāḷineñcamē |

Meaning : Mind ! Bless you. Think of a way to resort to the benevolent Lord with the glory of ending the severe sin, due to plucking of the white head (of Brahma), revolting to the senses of black-throated Śiva with matted locks bearing Ganga, by giving fragrant water from His chest decorated with garland.

Notes : In the last pācuram, Āḷvār sought ever-lasting bliss. The prime requisite of this bliss is complete subservience to the Lord, devoid of self-esteem and arrogance. In this pācuram, Āḷvār prays to the Lord to create these conditions as He did to Śiva, the Kapāli.

Pācuram 114

Īṇamāya eṭṭum nīkki ētamiṇri mīdu pōy

Vāṇamāḷa vallaiyēl vaṇaṅgivaḷttu eṇ neñcamē !

Ñāṇamāki ñāyirāki ñāla muṇṇum ōreyiṇṇu

Ēṇa māyiḍanda mūrtti entai pōdameṇṇiyē |

Meaning : My mind ! If you want to stay in Paramapada by going through the arciradi way freed of distress and bereft of the eight demeaning qualitiesv, worship and praise at the feet of my Father who, in the form of Varāha, pulled out the whole worlds keeping it on His unique tusk, and who enlightened me (with knowledge of the self) and made me like the sun (to see through the futility of the worlds).

Notes : Īnamāya eṭṭu - The demeaning things are avidya, karma, vāsana, ruci, contact with prakṛti and the three tāpatrayas ādhyātmika, ādibhautika and ādhidaivika. It is only the Lord that is the means for taking the prapanna through all stages from enlightenment to stay in Paramapada. In this pācuram, Āḷvār reminds us of the varāha caramaślōka that if we meditate on the Lord when we are able to, the Lord will lead us to Paramapada. (nayāmi paramam gatim).

Pācuram 115

Attanāki aṇṇaiyāki āḷum empirāṇumāy

Ottovvāda palpiṇṇappalittu nammai āṭkoḷvāṇ

Muttaṇār mukundaṇār pukunḍu nammuḷ mēviṇār

Ettiṇāl iṭarkkaḍal kiḍatti ? ēḷai neñcamē |

Meaning : Ignorant mind ! How long can you be immersed in this sea of sorrow ? The Lord of Paramapada who grants us salvation has come and united with us. As our Father, Mother and Master, He will end our innumerable births, both alike (in the kārmik cycle) and different (in forms such as worms, animals, beings and stationary) and accept us in servitude.

Notes : It is one thing for Āḷvār to say, as in the last pācuram, that He is the only means. But, with the load of karmas that we carry and the fierce independence of the Lord, what guarantee is there that the Lord will take us ? In this pācuram, Āḷvār assures himself that the Lord who is the unique Lord of Paramapada who grants salvation also is abiding in us with all sorts of intimate relationship and there is nothing to worry.

Pācuram 116

Mārṛuceyda vāḷarakkān nāḷulappa aṇṛ.u ilaṅkai

Nīṛuceydu cenṛ.u koṇṛ.u venṛ.ikoṇḍa vīraṇāṛ

Vēṛuceydu tammulēṇṇai vaittiḍāmaiyaḷ naman

Kūruceydu koṇḍiṛ.anda kuṛ.ṛ.am eṇṇavallaṇē |

Meaning : Can Yama think of separating me and taking away with the blmish that I am apart and not united with the Hero who, at one time, conquered by burning, entering and slaughtering in Lanka, ending the days of Rāvana who encountered fully armed'?

Notes : The Lord may be disposed to take Āḷvār to Him but what about the loads of sins that he has committed all along for which he is answerable to Yama ? Āḷvār says in this pācuram, that Yama cannot touch him once he is united with the Lord.

Pācuram 117

Accam nōyoḍu paḷ piṛ.appu āya mūppivai

Vaitta cintai vaittavākkai māṛ.ṛ.ivāṇiler.ṛ.uvāṇ

Accutaṇ aṇantakīrtti ādiyantamillavaṇ

Naccunākaṇaikkidaṇda nātan vēdagītanē |

Meaning : The Lord reposing on the poisonous snake, the one that is sung in the Vēdas, the One that has no end or beginning and the One of limitless glory of never letting down (His devotees) will make me ascend Vaikuṇṭha leaving the body with the mind of fear, disease, troubles (tāpatraya), the several births and old age.

Notes : The last pācuram spoke of sins. There are three types of them, namely, 1) those that are to be expiated in hall, 2) those that are to be carried forward in the next birth, and 3) those that are in operation now (prārabdha karma). It may be possible to be absolved of the first two types by austerities (Upāsana). Prārabdha Karma has to be gone through unless with the grace of the Lord which Āḷvār seeks in this pācuram.

Pācuram 118

Calliṇum toḷiṇkaṇum toḍakkaṇṭa aṇbium

Allum nanpakaliṇōḍum ānamālaikālaiyum

Vallināṇ malarkkiḷatti nāta ! pāda pōḍinaḷ

Pulliuḷḷam vīḷvilādu pūṇḍumīṇḍadillaiyē |

Meaning : Lord of the Dame on the lovely and broad Lotus ! Alas ! I have not chanced to see this grand union resorting to your lotus feet, without break, in the evenings and mornings caused by the day and the night, with love after cutting the worldly ties associated with speech and deed.

Notes : In the last few pācurams, Āḷvār assured himself that the Lord will absolve him of the three types of sins and make him ascend Paramapada. In this pācuram, he is letting the Lord know his eagerness towards the same.

Pācuram 119

Panṇicūḷ, araṅkamēya pūvaivaṇṇa ! māya ! kē!

Enṇadāvi enṇum valviṇaiyiṇutkoḷ, undeḷ, undu

Unṇapādamenṇa niṇṇa oṇcudarkkoḷ, u malar

Manna vandupūṇḍu vāṭṭam iṇṇi eṅkum niṇratē |

Meaning : Lord of the colour of atasi flower residing in Śrīrangam surrounded by Kāvēri ! Wondrous Lord ! Listen. This my soul which has sprouted and grown in intense sins has plunged enduringly, without withering, in the various aspects of your form, and the uniquely established (in the scriptures) glories, delightful like bunches of flowers.

Notes : Finally if one asks Āḷvār how he, who was steeped in sins, developed such devotion, he points to the Lord at Śrīrangam who attracted Him by His form, nature and glories.

Pācuram 120

Iyakkaṇ, āda palpiṇ, appil enṇai māṇṇi iṇṇuvandu

Uyakkal mēkavaṇṇaṇ naṇṇi enṇilāya taṇṇulē

Mayakkiṇāṇi maṇṇucōti ādalāl, enṇāvitāṇ

Iyakkelām aṇṇuttu aṇṇāda iṇbaviḍuper, r, atē |

Meaning : The cloud-hued Lord came today to save me and, ending the several never-ending births, established His splendour in me, His property. Therefore, my soul, freed of all propensities towards prakṛti, has attained salvation with ever-lasting bliss.

Notes : Finally, Āḷvār concludes this great composition stating that not only was he just attracted by the beauty of the Lord at Śrīrangam but was also riding on the crest of His glory by his own grace like an elephant which sits down to enable one to mount it and has attained ever-lasting bliss.

Long live the glory of Tirumaḷiṣai Āḷvār ! ! !